

**FROM THE CHAIR**

High Lane U3A continues to thrive; membership is slightly higher than at this time last year and groups are coming up with ever more interesting ideas. This is reflected in this edition of the newsletter; clearly our groups have been very active over the last two months. We will celebrate some of the activities at the Group Leaders meeting on 27 July so we encourage group leaders and helpers to attend. To say thank you to the group leaders and helpers, there will be refreshments and a small libation!

You can find out more about any of our groups from the group pages on the website or by speaking to our Groups Co-ordinator, Doreen Scotte, or the relevant group leader at the monthly meetings. If you have an idea for a group we don't yet have Doreen will be very happy to discuss it with you.

**Social events**

I hope you have got your tickets for the Wine evening on 6 July. Once again, there will be six wines for you to sample accompanied by a selection of cheese and biscuits.



Robert Louis Stevenson

After much discussion the Committee decided that our Autumn event this year should be a Music evening. The date is Friday, 26 October so please put this in your diaries. Entertainment will be provided by a saxophone and guitar duo and the evening will start with a two-course meal. Tickets cost £15 and will be on sale at the August and September meetings.

We are always happy to receive new ideas for social events - and offers of help. Please let any member of the Committee know if you have an idea for a social event.

As well as our social events, the Travel group continues to produce interesting trips and holidays; the reports from Shrewsbury and Dorset later in the newsletter are evidence of the enjoyment members gain from traveling with their

friends in U3A. You can see a preview of the proposed list for 2019 on page 4. This looks great – and includes the first river cruise holiday.

As you know our U3A is a member of the Greater Manchester Network of U3As. The Cottonopolis projects being developed by U3As within the Network are making exciting progress and there are four events over the summer. As members of the Network, these are free to High Lane U3A members but you will need to book a place. There is more about this on page 3 of this issue and flyers are available at the meeting and on the website.

Diane Saxon

**IN THIS ISSUE:**

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**FROM THE EDITOR**

Items for the newsletter from members are always welcome so if you have any suggestions for content or articles of interest to U3A members please contact me at [newslettereditor@highlaneu3a.org.uk](mailto:newslettereditor@highlaneu3a.org.uk)

The next edition of the newsletter will be the September 2018 edition. Please can you get your contributions to the editor by 31 August?

## MONTHLY MEETINGS

### MAY MEETING

At the May meeting, Elizabethan historian David Templeman presented an illustrated talk entitled Two Queens and a Countess. The protagonists were Elizabeth I, Mary Queen of Scots and Bess of Hardwick, arguably the three most colourful and charismatic women in Elizabethan History. All three were important women with influence in a time when women belonged to their fathers or husbands, were generally not educated and had little chance of a life outside the home.

David brought along some of his books and information about Sheffield Manor Lodge which was the home of George Talbot, 6th Earl of Shrewsbury and his wife Bess of Hardwick. The Lodge became a royal prison for Mary, Queen of Scots who was kept in custody in the manner befitting a Queen. Sheffield Manor Lodge is open to the public but check for opening times.

### JUNE MEETING

At the June meeting Nigel Linge, Professor of Telecommunications at the University of Salford gave a very interesting illustrated talk entitled "How Manchester Cotton Wired up the World".

By the 1850's the electric telegraph had connected England to Ireland and Europe but communication with the USA was still restricted to letters which had to travel by boat. He spoke about how engineers and businessmen in the 1850's overcame the huge problems in laying the first copper telegraph cable under the Atlantic.

The story of the Trans-Atlantic Telegraph Cable is told from the point of view of how the cable was made, which ships were involved, the technical challenges faced and the failures and successes of the 1857/58 and 1865/66 expeditions.

Besides outlining the background to this event Nigel focused attention on the people behind the story and one man in particular, John Pender, a Manchester based cotton merchant who proved to be a major influential figure. In 1866, John Pender was the leading financier/director and Chairman of the Companies involved in the first successful

laying of a transatlantic cable from Valentia Island off the coast of Ireland to Heart's Content, Newfoundland and Labrador. He went on to found 32 cable companies one of which became Cable and Wireless, still a major international telecommunications company. This was the foundation in global telecommunications which followed, hence the title of the talk.

Sue Harlin

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### ARE YOU INTERESTED IN READING?

A small group of U3A members have expressed an interest in restarting the Reading Group. It is always difficult to choose a time that suits everybody, but the general consensus was that we should meet on the afternoon of the first Monday of the month, starting in September.

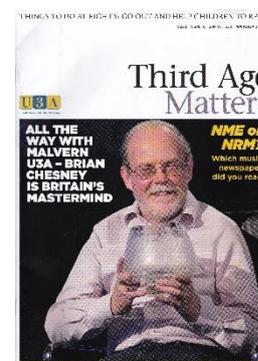
If you are interested in joining this group, please contact me by email or phone, (details of my email address and phone number can be found on the list of team leaders) or see me at the next general meeting on the 11th July.

Marlene Brookes

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### THIRD AGE MATTERS

Over a quarter of a million copies of the U3A magazine Third Age Matters are delivered to members each issue. There are five issues each year and these are posted directly to your home. The Summer 2018 issue has an article on the current MasterMind champion who is a member of Malvern U3A.



Talk to Margaret McDermott if you would like to receive the magazine. The cost is £2.50 for the five issues.

### COTTONOPOLIS EVENTS

Members of U3As in the Greater Manchester Network can attend free - but you need to book. You can find out more and reserve a place at <https://cottonopolis.weebly.com/summer-2018.html#>

Tuesday 31st July 6.30 pm: Finding the Cotton Famine

Portico Library, Mosley Street, Manchester  
 Marking the launch of the accessible database of Cotton Famine poems, with recitations and song drawn from the original poems sent into local newspapers. Ideal for anyone wishing to join the Cotton Famine Poetry research project (below). This is a free event but please book online.

Wed 22nd August Manchester Central Library:  
 How to join in with the Cotton Famine Poetry research. 10.30 – 3.00 pm Free to GMU3A network members

For our members who want to experience first hand the buzz of finding a piece of real history, Dr. Simon Rennie will show what to look for, how to record and submit your findings and - crucially - how to use the microfilm readers to be found in our public libraries.

Monday September 3rd: Manchester Mass Motoring  
 MMU, 70 Oxford Road (near Oxford Road Station), 10.30 am - 2.30 pm

Free to GMU3A network members  
 Dr Craig Horner will lead you through his 'living history' project, which recognises the contribution of motoring and car ownership to the development of Manchester and its suburbs. Your memories of your first car, trips and journeys can contribute to a historical database, and you will learn how to replicate the methods for gathering these accounts back in your own U3A.

7th August: Sketching the Past  
 10.00 am – lunchtime, informal try-out of urban sketching around Castlefield, in friendly experienced company with Catherine Freeman of Tameside U3A. Free, but bring own materials.

### CONCERT FOR ST ANN'S HOSPICE

Thank you to all the people from U3A who attended the recent St Ann's Hospice concert. There was a terrific response from High Lane members who helped the choir reach a final fundraising total of approximately £15000 for the year 2017-2018. It costs £16000 per day to run the Hospice so this will go towards almost a day's running costs.

Audience members have commented on the splendid organ playing of Nigel Ogden, many of whom enjoyed joining in with the ABBA medley as well as the selection of songs from Les Miserables sung by the choir.

If you enjoyed this concert why not plan to come to hear the choir again on Friday December 14th at the Bridgewater Hall. A coach will be going to the Bridgewater Hall from Hazel Grove park and ride. Tickets on sale in September Thank you.

Carol Traffon

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### SALFORD UNIVERSITY HEARING RESEARCH

On the 13th and 14th of July, as part of the University's Festival of Research, researchers at Salford University are inviting older and hard of hearing individuals to spend a day at their world renowned Acoustics Research Centre.

On the day participants will have the opportunity to try out the new audio technology, tour one of the quietest places on earth and participate in the research. Participants will also have the opportunity to chat to the researchers over a free lunch and learn more about their research.

The details for the day and more information can be found at <https://bit.ly/EARDay>  
 Anyone interested should sign up for the day by emailing [L.Ward7@edu.salford.ac.uk](mailto:L.Ward7@edu.salford.ac.uk)

**FORTHCOMING TRAVEL EVENTS**

Contact: Margaret McDermott or Ruth Smith

3 August	CARNFORTH STATION AND LEIGHTON HALL Carnforth is where the film Brief Encounter was made. Guided tour of the hall, home of the furniture making Gillow family. Falconry display. Cost £17. Depart Village Hall at 9am
17- 24 September	IRELAND Payment for entrance fees at August meeting (£25) Cheque to High Lane U3A (Heritage) Minibus from High Lane to the Airport to be arranged.
21-25 October	BUDAPEST Balance at July meeting. Cheque to High Lane U3A (Heritage) Payment for entrance fees (to be advised) at October meeting.
21 Nov – 7 Dec	CRUISE P&O ARCADIA from Southampton to Lisbon. Canaries, Madeira (2days) Azores

**Proposed Travel programme for 2019**

23-27 May	Gloucester Tall ships weekend. Hallmark hotel Deposits of £50 pp due October.
July	Somerset
Early Sept	IRELAND
Early October	River cruise Medieval Germany

**HOLIDAY DISCOUNTS**

- Northumbria Travel offers an extra 5% discount on all Viking cruises for members and family.
- Fred Olsen Cruise Lines offers an extra 5% membership discount on your first sailing booked with them. Existing customers can save 5% in addition to their 5% Loyalty Cub discount.
- Riviera Travel will donate 10% of the final cost of your holiday to your U3A.

You can find details in Third Age Matters

**OUR U3A ACTIVITIES**

6 July	Wine tasting evening 7.30pm Village Hall
27 July	Group Leaders meeting 3pm Village Hall
8 Aug	Monthly meeting. The Mercy Ships. Talk by Frances King
23 Aug	Dining Group lunch at The Beehive Coombs
12 Sept	Monthly meeting. The Jewish Way of Life presented by Barbara Fraser
15 Sept	Theatre Group Carver Theatre to see Wife After Death
26 Oct	Music evening. Music by saxophone and guitar duo Copyrite plus a two-course meal. Tickets cost just £15 and will be on sale at the August and September meetings.

**REGIONAL AND NATIONAL U3A EVENTS**

28 -31 Aug	Residential Summer School Newton Rigg College, Penrith.
4 Oct	Unravelling the Whitworth-Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester A day of hands on discovery to unravel the secrets of the gallery’s textile and wallpaper collection. Talks from curators, a tour and a hands-on session facilitated by an artist with welcome refreshments. 10.00 am to 4.00 pm £27.50
15 Oct	The Royal Institution – London Explore an afternoon of science talks at the Royal Institution London 1.45 pm – 4.45 pm. £21.50 (Bookings open in July)

Online Booking is available  
[www.u3a.org.uk/events](http://www.u3a.org.uk/events) or call the National Office  
0208 466 6139

## GROUP REPORTS

### BALLET APPRECIATION GROUPS 3 AND 4

23rd May / 7th June:

We saw the Dutch National Ballet in a performance of Mata Hari. This was a new ballet performed in 2016. It tells the true story of a woman from a Dutch middle-class family who found fame as the exotic dancer Mata Hari. During World War 1, she became a political agent and was eventually executed as a spy.

27th June / 5th July:

We looked at two British choreographers:

Sir Kenneth Macmillan was filmed discussing his life and work in 1990, two years before his death.

The film featured many of his ballets, and included footage of him rehearsing The Prince of the Pagodas with the nineteen-year-old Darcey Bussell. This was followed by his short piece Concerto, danced to music by Shostakovitch.

We then watched an extract showing Liam Scarlett, the Royal Ballet's youngest choreographer, rehearsing his ballet Sweet Violets.

Next on the agenda is the Macmillan ballet The Prince of the Pagodas.

Meg Humphries

### BALLROOM DANCING

In the summer months, ballroom dancing is scaled down to once a month, and more of the slower dances are being played in our current hot weather!

Walter Mason

### CARD MAKING

The card making group continues to meet on the first Thursday of the month at St Thomas's Church Hall in High Lane. We have nine regular members and have capacity for a few more if anyone feels the urge to make their own greeting cards - it is a very satisfying and absorbing hobby, ideal for anyone who wants to be creative but doesn't have confidence in their artistic abilities, as the patterns and tools we use can do most of the art work for us.

Here are some photos of cards the group has made recently. The first two were made using a technique called "Eclipse". This involves die cutting letters from the base design and using foam to raise the letters so they stand out from the base design - in this case gift wrapping paper.



The next cards were made with holidays in mind and showcase a set of Moroccan themed papers and designs.





Finally, a couple of cards with backgrounds made using Pixie Powders and Shimmer Shakers - water soluble colour pigment and mica powder - a die cut frame and flower, and a stamped sentiment.

I know it's only July, and we have just had one of the hottest and sunniest Junes on record, but good crafter's minds turn to preparing for Christmas at this time of year, so we are planning to make our first Christmas card of the year at our July meeting. We are also planning to hold an exhibition of our cards at the November general meeting, so you will get to see a level of detail and interest that my poor photographic skills don't usually do justice to.

If you would like to give card making a try, you'd be very welcome to join us at a card making meeting - just email us at [cardmaking@highlaneu3a.org.uk](mailto:cardmaking@highlaneu3a.org.uk) to let us know you'll be coming, so we can bring enough packs and equipment for everyone.

Christine Fox  
Dot Green

## CURRENT AFFAIRS

### May Meeting

The current affairs group meets on a Wednesday afternoon each month to discuss a range of current affairs questions. It's a bit like 'Question Time' or 'Any Questions' on the BBC. Members of the group submit the written questions about any subject under the sun. The group comments on the questions or not as they choose. Generally all very light hearted; no pressure and a chance to 'get things off your chest'. We always finish our deliberations with Margaret's delicious cake, biscuits tea or coffee.

Six of us addressed the questions this month which were -

- Were the police correct when they raided Sir Cliff Richards home in the UK Sir without informing Sir Cliff? We are unanimous and felt the police were wrong.
- Are prison sentences for serious crimes too lenient particularly when the sentence is reduced for good behaviour? We were split but felt more could be done on rehabilitation.
- Should Boris Johnson have the use of a private jet for his duties as Foreign Secretary? We were split on this question. Some said yes he should others no he should 'use the bus!'
- Is Mark Carney Governor of The Bank Of England correct when he says the average household in Britain is worse off by £900 per year due to Brexit? We felt it is too soon to make such statements and not all the amount is due to Brexit.
- Has the House of Lords out lived its usefulness? Our response - no it has not, the House of Lords does provide a useful service to Government.
- Germany France and the like have modern clean efficient public transport. Why cannot Britain? We agreed that public transport – trains buses and trams should be state owned and state financed for the benefit of the public and not for private profit.

Trevor Kinvig

## JUNE MEETING

As usual many and varied topics were discussed.

- We thought that the closure of several stores and the state of the High Street in many towns was mainly because of the expansion of the internet and out of town shopping, high business rates and car parking charges.
- There are reports of many suicides in universities, 10 in Bristol in the last eighteen months. We thought of several reasons for this; the reduced number of tutors leading to little contact and supervision of students, perhaps too many taking academic courses for which they were not suited, the high fees, student loans and the fact that a university degree is no longer a guarantee of well-paid employment.
- We discussed whether cannabis should be legalised but the majority thought only for medicinal purposes and not for recreational use. Apparently the UK is one of the biggest exporters of marijuana.
- Immigration was mentioned yet again. No country seems to have a fair solution since refugees, economic migrants and illegal immigrants seem to be among the huge numbers on the move. Several countries have tried to close their borders, Angela Merkel is in trouble because of her immigration policy, Italy and Malta has banned refugee ships and as for Donald Trump separating children from their parents on the Mexican border which produced a protest from Laura Bush and even his wife Melania.
- Although Brexit is in the news virtually every day we spent little time on this topic. David Davis is reported to have said that when we leave the EU we will have little say over how European Institutions operate. Surely no say at all!! Two strong supporters of Brexit are not showing much faith in the UK. Jacob Rees Mogg has set up an investment fund in Ireland and Nigel Lawson has applied for French residency.

Margaret McDermott

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## DINING

In the midst of this glorious summer the Dining Group could not have picked a better venue for their June outing. Peruga on the Glossop Road has the most magnificent views from their dining room and we occupied the whole length of their windows. Sadly as well as admiring the beauty of nature we could see in the distance the smoke from the dreadful fires on the moors.

Twenty seven were present for a delicious three course evening meal with tea or coffee and naturally due to the warm evening glasses of wine and other cold drinks were imbibed. The two long tables we were seated at led to lots of chatter and good spirits. altogether a very pleasant evening. We are all looking forward to our next meal which will be at the Beehive in Combs in August when we will be back to our usual lunch.

Dorothy Neillands  
Dorothy Gerrard

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## GARDENING

Hare Hill Gardens was visited in May when its Rhododendrons and Azaleas gave a fine show, and made a pleasing visit for our group.

Lynda's garden was the venue in early June. The garden is partly in transition after patio changes, but perennial osteospernums, early iris, and David Austin roses particularly caught the eye.



The late June trip to Thornbridge Hall fell foul of the u3a visit to Buxton Opera house, so had to be replaced by a morning visit to Walter's. A mixed bag of candelabra primroses, sisyrinchiums, clematis and roses gave plenty of colour. A pink phlomis, paeony Bowl of Beauty and clematis Princess Diana were amongst the more unusual flowers that people liked.

Walter Mason

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## GERMAN

We haven't met quite so frequently in the last few weeks, largely because of my trips away, but numbers are keeping up well, averaging eight for each session.

As usual, we have heard interesting accounts of trips abroad and in this country and have sampled treats from a variety of nations: recently, Maple Cream Cookies from Canada, Lutherbrodt from Wittenberg to commemorate the 500th anniversary of Protestantism and biscuits from Wales. Recent texts have included problems with children following divorce, neighbourhood crime and the murder of a concert pianist. It sounds quite gloomy but is quite a lot of fun.

Marlene Brookes

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## HISTORY

At our May meeting, our guest speaker, Anne Herle, presented a very interesting and unusual topic entitled Crested China. This was very specific crested china because it was manufactured specifically for the Marple and its environs tourist trade. It was really surprising to hear that the number of people who visited the Marple area, on a Whit Bank Holiday in 1877, 2,700 visitors came from various churches in the towns and cities. There were any number of restaurants and cafes and so it was a perfect place to sell small pieces of china on which was painted a crest and either Marple or Marple Bridge. This became a very popular souvenir trade for the locality from the late 1800s but began to disappear by the 1930s.

Our June meeting consisted of three short presentations.

### Mary Seacole

Mary Seacole, born of a Scottish father and Jamaican mother, in Jamaica in 1805. Mary's mother had been a 'doctress', trying to help with the locals health problems and so Mary grew up in a nursing environment. On hearing about the war in the Crimea she decided to go to London to volunteer to help, but after she had been turned down twice, she decided to go to Scutari and set up a hotel to help the soldiers with accommodation and their health issues. This was very successful and she was praised by the war correspondents and also the military for her the care and comfort she gave. When the war ended she returned to London but was declared bankrupt. Fortunately, she was saved by donations from people who were grateful for the service she had given in the Crimea. She became something of a celebrity until she died in 1881.

### Constance Wilde

Constance Wilde, wife of Oscar Wilde, has often been portrayed as a very hard woman, but new research has now come to light which shows her as a very supportive wife to Oscar, even when he was imprisoned for homosexuality. Unfortunately, because he was unable to give up his life style, she eventually changed her name and forced him to give up his parental rights to their two sons.

In her own right, she was a very intelligent woman, speaking several languages, supporting women's rights and pioneered a new type of fashion for women. Constance had suffered with health problems for about ten

years, which according to her grandson was probably multiple sclerosis. However, she eventually moved to live in Italy where she underwent surgery for 'nerve' problems, but died at the age of thirty-nine a few days later.

### RNLI

The RNLI has been based in Poole, Dorset, since its inception in the early 1800s: Poole being the second largest natural harbour in the world. Over recent years the RNLI has taken over all the coast guard services around the country. At its new headquarters in Poole volunteers are trained in the most up to date facilities. They also have an international training programme which is carried out all over the world.

The next meeting will be Wednesday 25th July when it will be a group contribution on the subject of Women's Suffrage.

Pam Curley

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### OPERA APPRECIATION

8th / 22nd May.

We saw an excellent production of Don Giovanni from the New York Metropolitan opera. Recorded in 2000, it starred Bryn Terfel as the Don.

14th / 26th June.

We stayed with the Metropolitan Opera for a performance of Tchaikovsky's Eugene Onegin. Sung in Russian, it featured some outstanding performances, particularly that of Anna Netrebko as Tatiana.

At our next meeting, I intend to show Thais. This features some beautiful music by Massenet and costumes designed by Christian Lacroix.

Meg Humphries

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### PHOTOGRAPHY

In May a small group explored Marple in a photoshoot; Walter by the canal, Derek around Etherow, and Jeff in the town centre. We then gathered in the Asda cafe to judge our Monthly Competition - Music. Bob's pictures Middle East Musician and Marching Guards were 1st and 2nd; while equal 3rd were Walter-Trombonist, Prague, Derek -Yamaha Keys, and Derek - Banjo.



At the end of June, Marple Scenes was the competition, with Derek 1st (Boats at Etherow) and 2nd (Etherow Weir), and a triple tie for 3rd, with Walter (Bargee), Walter (Canada Duck) and Bob (Barges in Lock).



In the remainder of the meeting, a selected list of 70 local pictures was viewed, and favourites chosen and agreed. These were then whittled down by discussion in subsequent days to 13 views to use in a proposed 2019 U3A High Lane Calendar We believe the final choice should be as attractive and interesting as was this year’s calendar- and hopefully as popular!

Walter Mason

**QUIZ GROUP**

The Quiz group continues to find interesting and challenging ways of tormenting members’ brains! In May Irene set us questions on a wide-ranging choice of topics with quizzes on dates and song titles containing colours in the refreshment break. In June, Marlene came up with the questions and we puzzled over composers, odd one outs and missing sequences with our coffee.

Here are a few of the sequences questions for you to try:

- Athens; \_\_\_\_\_; Beijing; London
- Clement Davies; Jo Grimond; \_\_\_\_\_; David Steel
- Germany; \_\_\_\_\_; Brazil; Russia

Diane Saxon

**SHAKESPEARE**

At our remaining meetings in 2018 we will be reading Richard III followed by the Scottish Play followed by As You Like It.

Here’s a flavour of all three

<p>“And all the clouds that lour’d upon our house In the deep bosom of the ocean buried”</p>	<p>“What’s done cannot be undone: to bed, to bed, to bed”</p>	<p>“Blow, blow thou winter wind Thou art not so unkind As man’s ingratitude”</p>
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Steve Reynolds

## TRAVEL

### Shrewsbury

Great thanks to Ruth and all involved in arranging our wonderful weekend with perfect weather to match! Our hotel was great, Hack Green a bit spooky, but the Oswestry Ironwork Centre display of very lifelike animals such as elephants, rhinos and crocs and the roan coloured horses were so lifelike we wanted to stroke them! Our journey from Welshpool to Llanfair on the narrow gauge railway through beautiful hilly countryside was very enjoyable with tea and cake to finish our trip. Inside Powis Castle and round the beautiful Gardens was a delight.

The grand finale was Shrewsbury where we enjoyed a cruise on the River Severn complete with a commentary from our Captain. We had free time to explore some of Shrewsbury's interesting buildings, churches and museums and also the beautiful walks along the river bank and into the parks. The site of the old Quarry had a beautiful garden and lake with fountain dedicated to the Queen Mother. Finally we had to leave beautiful Shrewsbury for our journey home through lovely countryside until joining the heavy motorway traffic as we approached Stockport. We had an excellent and helpful driver throughout this long weekend. My thanks to all concerned.

Beryl Hatton

### Dorset

Our excellent hotel on the outskirts of Dorchester was a good base for our five night holiday. Some members' thoughts on our visits follow.

#### **RNLI College, Poole.** Monday 4th June

I was totally impressed from first sight on entering to leaving the RNLI College. It opened in 2004 and since then has followed the path of greater efficiency and planning to drastically cut costs. With no government intervention, they now train and retrain volunteer guards from crews in Britain and through projects, the world. The College has a hotel, café, bars etc., all well designed, for the comfort of the volunteers and visitors. Essential of course are the facilities to simulate any type of sea rescue; we all had a go to "go on a mission" and tried not to feel sick!! A deep indoor pool is used to simulate sea conditions for practice rescues, without going to sea. They now have a workshop where they build their own boats; nowadays only one type is made. It has twin water jets and operates in shallow water, pumping out one and a half tons of water per second and can change position in its own space. Impressed? I was. 95% of the workforce are volunteers and 1 in 8 are women.

Shirley Boore

#### **Poole Harbour Cruise** Monday 4th June

We boarded the Solent Scene for our cruise around Poole Harbour, the world's second largest natural harbour after Sydney, Australia. Of the five islands in the harbour the largest is Brownsea which is owned by the National Trust and is a haven for wildlife especially the red squirrel and little Egret. It was on this island in 1907 that Baden Powell started the scout movement and the first camp was held here.

Next we saw Brownsea Castle, strategically placed for protection against the Spanish in Tudor times and later the French. Today it is owned by The John Lewis Partnership for its employees.

As we sailed past Sandbanks, specifically the "Golden Mile" where the houses owned by the rich and famous fetch around £30m we were amazed by their lack of privacy. The Haven Hotel, another point of interest made famous in 1898 when Marconi established his radio station here. The Sandbanks Chain Ferry has been in service since the 1920s taking five minutes compared to a few hours driving.

Furzey Island looked very natural and unspoilt but we were informed that it contained 120 oil wells and since the 1970s had been drilled for oil.

Poole started off as a fishing port and today it keeps some of its heritage with fish farming especially oysters.

Dorothy Neillands

#### **Portland Castle** Tuesday 5th June

We visited Portland Castle the last Tudor Gun Fort built by Henry VIII in 1539-40 to defend Portland Harbour from attack by his enemies in Europe after he divorced Katherine of Aragon. His forts were strongly built with very thick walls and narrow slit type openings, like crosses with rounded ends to enable the men to rest their guns while firing. No candles could be lit, except inside lanterns because of the gunpowder stored inside; it must have been cold and gloomy. It was manned by only 15 men (there were three cannons each manned by five men). The castle was never attacked. At the time of the Armada, the Governor, Sir Walter Raleigh, complained that the guns had been taken to put on ships!! The castle was only attacked in the Civil War when the Royalists were attacked by the Parliamentarians. More recently it was used as a barracks in the 1st and 2nd World Wars.

#### **Abbotsbury Swannery** Tuesday 5th June

At 3pm we arrived at Abbotsbury Swannery just in time for tea (their tea not ours!!). This is the only managed colony of nesting mute swans situated in a natural lagoon formed by Chesil Beach. There were hundreds of white swans all waiting for the buckets of grain and we were invited to help with the feeding. Originally Abbotsbury farmed swans for lavish banquets and provided quills for Lloyds of London and today their quills are still used for the Doom Register (list of ships lost at sea).



Judith Ridgway

#### Wednesday 6th June

We had a free day in **Dorchester**, Dorset's county town. Some of our group visited Hardy's Cottage, some the Dorset Museum and others looked for bargains in the Market and surrounding shops.

After an early evening meal, we took a lovely country coach ride through beautiful villages to Bridport and West Bay.

#### **Sherborne Castle** Thursday 7th June

The castle was built by Sir Walter Raleigh in 1594 and has been the Wingfield Digby family home since 1617. We had a wonderful guide, who loved the castle, its family and contents. All the furniture, carpets, china, silver, glass etc. belonged to the castle. The gardens and grounds, designed by Capability Brown, were very well maintained. An excellent tea-room and gift shop were busy with our intrepid group.

Liz Turner

#### **Fleet Air Arm Museum** Thursday 7th June

Fourteen members of the Group chose to visit the museum based at the Navy's main Air Arm base in the UK. We were able to get up close to some of the most powerful and interesting naval aircraft to have taken to the skies over the last century, one of the largest historic military aircraft collections in Europe. Exhibits included some of the earliest Naval aeroplanes including a replica of an early Short biplane of 1912 on which the first

Naval pilots learned to fly and a Seafire – the Navy’s version of the Spitfire – through to the first British Concorde.

The photograph shows a preserved Sopwith Baby float Seaplane fitted with early rockets. These aeroplanes were used by the Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS) in its attempt to defend Great Britain against the Zeppelin airship bombing attacks made during the First World War. On 1st April 1918 the RNAS was merged with the Royal Flying Corp, the Army's air contingent, to form the Royal Air Force.



We were also able to look into the cockpit and step inside a Sea King helicopter that ‘flew’ us to make a simulated visit to the HMS Ark Royal Aircraft Carrier in the 1980’ where it was possible to experience the thrills and sounds of a working flight deck. Whilst there, we were ‘shown’ a Phantom strike fighter and a Buccaneer strike bomber taking off and landing.

With the museum being located on a working naval air station we were also able to see first-hand modern helicopters making training flights.

Eric Harlin

### **SS Great Britain, Bristol Friday 8th June**

Following an uneventful journey we arrived safely at Bristol’s Great Western Dockyard to visit the SS Great Britain, the ship that changed the world of sea travel with her innovative and advanced technical design. At her launch in 1843 she was the largest iron clad powered sailing ship in the world. During construction Brunel decided to discard the planned paddle wheels and instead install a revolutionary screw propeller.

Initially she served as a luxury ocean liner conveying up to 252 1st and 2nd class passengers across the Atlantic, but by 1852 she was modified to transport 750 emigrants at a time to Australia with many inspired by the Gold Rush. In 1882 she was modified yet again to carry Welsh coal to America, this coming to an abrupt end following storm damage round Cape Horn and she ended up as store for coal and wool in the Falkland Islands until abandoned as a hulk in 1933. However in 1970 she was rescued and brought back to Bristol for restoration to her initial state as a luxury liner.

Depending on how adventurous we felt it was possible to explore the three decks accessible to passengers, descend below the waterline to view the external hull and even climb the rigging as a Victorian sailor!

Roger Drinkwater

Many thanks to all members who took time to share their thoughts and experiences of our holiday.

Sue Harlin

## WALKING

**Tuesday Walk 12th June Mount Famine & Southhead**

Due to various commitments and holidays our number was down to eight. The walk started from Kinder Road Hayfield and after crossing the river we followed it for a short way down the valley towards Hayfield. We then turned left to start the uphill climb and after negotiating a short overgrown path we emerged at the junction of Highgate road with a seat where we took a short stop to get our breath back and enjoy the view back over Hayfield.

Suitably refreshed we carried on up the tarmac road climbing steadily until the start of the Pennine Bridleway. This was then a steady but undulating gentle

climb along which we stopped to admire views to our right down onto Peep-o-Day and across to Chinley Churn and Cracken Edge.

A well earned coffee break was taken just before we approached Mount Famine and Southhead. Four of the more adventurous in our group decided to take the steep narrow path up to the summit of Southhead whilst the remainder of us continued along the bridleway to the other side where we took an early lunch and waited for them to rejoin the party.

After lunch we continued our journey downwards in single file along a quite steep narrow grassy track and through a patch of bracken before crossing a footbridge over a stream at the bottom and joining a bridlepath where we paused to look back up the steep slope to the summit of Southhead.

The bridle path took us past Southhead farm to meet up with a tarmac road which led us down to Coldwell Clough where we passed through the shelter of the trees which was welcome shade after being out in the hot sun. A short uphill stretch brought us to the start of a woodland path which continued downhill past the camp site to meet the river in the valley which we crossed by the footbridge to return to the starting point of our walk.

A five mile walk enjoyed at a leisurely pace with glorious sunshine and lovely views, and NO STILES!!!!

Jeff Robinson

**Walk 8th May 2018****Rowarth – Lantern Pike – Coombes Edge - Rowarth.**

On a beautiful May spring morning 17 of us met at the Little Mill Inn in Rowarth. We began by walking uphill on a stony track which soon levelled out to give panoramic views of the surrounding hills before reaching a minor road. We followed this downhill before turning off left and then uphill again following the National Trust signpost to Lantern Pike.

After our coffee break the more energetic walkers climbed to the summit of Lantern Pike (373m) and met up with the rest of us a little further along the main path, extolling the magnificent views they had seen from the top.

Walking over grassy paths, we then followed the track over Matley Moor heading for the far end of Coombes Rocks. Having reached the highest point of our climb we enjoyed our lunch break in the glorious sunshine looking out over the fantastic countryside surrounding us.

We then completed our walk by walking along Cown Edge Rocks, enjoying a completely different view of towns and hills before dropping back down over grassy field paths into Rowarth. The day concluded with a welcome drink in the Little Mill Inn.

Shelagh Stokes



### Walk Wednesday 23rd May 2018



19 members set off from Wormhill to accomplish a 'challenging walk'. Wild Orchids were easily seen from the path as we walked down to Cheedale. Everyone managed to get to the top of the steep hill from the valley for a coffee stop with wonderful views.

Passing through Blackwell Hall Farm and into the hamlet of Blackwell was delightful in the warm sunshine. Climbing up a lane near Priestcliffe we veered off onto a track finding a good spot for our picnic lunch again with views. Then downwards on a long mostly stony track (meeting two motorcyclists coming towards us!) we eventually got to the B6049 road carefully walked down near to Millers Dale turning left to walk back to Wormhill

by the river Wye.

Ruth Smith

## LLANGOLLEN WALK WEEKEND REPORT



The Llangollen Summer Break went like a dream. Ideal weather, attractive walks, friendly crowd, interesting entertainment, and no organisational problems – of course, as organiser I would say that – but happily, others seemed to think so too!

It was our second visit to the Hand Hotel. It is perfectly situated by the river near the centre of Llangollen, comfortable, historic, the staff are easy-going and

helpful, and food is tasty in straightforward style. We had both dining room and entertaining room to ourselves.

As on our first visit to Llangollen, Erdigg (a National Trust property) made a splendid rendezvous, especially as the varied wooded slopes by the River Clywedog offered comfortable sheltered walking on a hot sunny day.

This time the five mile walk traversed Big Wood, then continued on a permitted path through meadows past Bryn-y-cabanau, up and down on a woodland path and then down to the river bank for lunch.

Locals from Hightown (a suburb of Wrexham) warned against trying paths in the swampy far woods (where the official Clywedog Trail is purported to go!), so we followed the knowledgeable dog walkers to the Sontley Bridge road, there to rejoin the pleasant paths in Coed-y-glyn Wood. Most continued on a loop to Felin Puleston, while others shortcutted to refresh happily with generous mugs of tea in the NT outdoor tea garden.



The following day, on the main eight mile walk, our full group of 22 started with a short steam train ride to Berwyn Station. After the train buffs had seen enough, the group crossed the River Dee by the historic Chain Bridge, went over the canal, and up steps to Llantysilio Green car park. There the group split. A five mile lower level walk avoiding steep climbs tempted a few, but the majority opted for the Eglwyseg Valley circuit. This featured Valle Crucis Abbey, one of the finest medieval sites in North Wales, beautiful river valleys, church and country inn both dating from the 15th C, and excellent views.

The route first crossed the lower slopes of Coed Hrydden, and after visiting the abbey (which made an ideal coffee stop) and making a wide loop, it followed a delightful track through the wooded slopes of Fron Fawr and along the edge of the Eglwyseg Valley.

After passing the Britannia Inn (happily open to wet down the packed lunches!), the route returned first on the occasionally tricky low slopes of Maesyrychen mountain, then (as the easier 5 mile route had done) following a section of the Dee Valley Way, passing Llantysilio Church, the Horseshoe Falls, and the beautiful Llangollen Canal back to the Hand Hotel. It was not all perfect! One or two awkward stiles on the easy route, and the tough climbs on the main route, tested some of our walkers, especially on a warm day. Some even questioned the veracity of the quoted distance! But a drink or two later, at the Chain Bridge or Hand Hotels, and all was well (I think?)!

The last day saw various activities, - town shopping, - visiting Chirk Castle and Bodnant Gardens (both NT), - but a good crowd went on the prepared circuit circumnavigating Dinas Bran with close up views of Trevor Rocks, and later a lovely contouring path from Wern-uchaf to Geufron. One couple (Ed and Carole) made a quick dash for the summit castle ruins, but most enjoyed the less demanding paths and minor roads.

Evening entertainment had two contrasting themes. The first evening had lots of audience participation, with teams competing at stand up Bingo, presenting their chosen or allotted jokes, and trying to find popular answers at Family Fortunes. Plenty of laughter – and an equal number of groans – so a good relaxing evening.

The second evening was more cerebral, apt after a hard days walking; again with teams, but this times with quizzes – one on car models, another on places around High Lane, with gentle background dance music – appropriate for a banqueting suite! The quizzes seemed to find favour – challenging but not impossible.

My thanks to David and Freda for reconnoitering the walk routes with me, and particularly to the group for the gift - well chosen!

Soon it will be time to think of next year. Where might High Lane u3a go next? Dovedale? Grange-over-Sands? Coniston? Grasmere? Bourton-on-the-Water? Forest of Bowland? The Wirral Peninsula? Anglesey? Still plenty of scope, and time, for someone else to take over the mantle, and deliver yet another enjoyable weekend for the walking group in 2019!

Walter Mason