



Newsletter

October 2026



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FROM THE CHAIR

The evenings are drawing in and the temperature is dropping. The extreme hot weather now seems a thing of the past. We managed to catch up with the Beetle drive last week and if you ask anyone who was there it was an enjoyable afternoon. Thanks to Dorothy for organising it. Next up is the Christmas party at the December meeting. The tickets will be on sale at the October and November meetings priced at £12 which includes entertainment and refreshments. There will also be a raffle. Entrance is by ticket only. You can bring your own drinks but please make sure you take all the empties home after the party.

After next year 2027, Sue and Margaret who run the travel group are stepping down. We are looking for 2/3 people to take over the group. If you are interested, please let any of the committee members know. There will be plenty of help for you.

Paul Kenneth

FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the October 2026 edition of the High Lane u3a newsletter. Once again, I would like to thank all the contributors for their interesting and informative contributions. The cover this month shows Art group members at their recent workshop.

A recent *u3a and me* research project explored the difference u3a makes to members' lives. The findings are very positive: 95% of respondents say u3a has improved their life in some way, while 90% say u3a gives them opportunities to keep learning and stay curious. You can read the report [here](#). If you would like to share what u3a means to you, we could collect these for a future edition of our newsletter. Please send me any contributions for this.



The newsletter is accompanied by the latest National Office bitesize Friends newsletter. The full version is available [here](#).

I always look forward to hearing from members so please feel free to share some of your news, your interests, or items you have found that you think would be of interest to other members. Don't forget that photographs are always useful. The next issue of the newsletter will be November 2026 so please send your contributions to me by 29th October 2026 at newslettereditor@highlaneu3a.org.uk

Diane Saxon

MONTHLY MEETING

The speaker at the September meeting was Brian Halliwell whose talk was titled It's a wonderful life: innovations and inventions. He started by reminding us of the film It's a wonderful Life which is one of his favourites for its memories of watching it as a child and its feel-good feeling. He went on to recall and recount many innovations and inventions which had taken place over the years and left people with these same sentiments. How things made people have an improved and wonderful life. These innovations and inventions often came about by a lucky chance as in the case of cat's eyes, Harpic and Bisto gravy. Some made huge changes to people's lives such as anaesthetics, contraceptives, the Panama Canal and some less momentous such as sliced bread, Persil washing powder and Tippex. He also reminisced about films, toys and games and early comics which stirred everyone's memories.

Brian is a wonderful speaker who entertained the audience without notes or a microphone. He was very well received and lots of people were keen to chat to him after the talk.

The next meeting is Wednesday 14th October. Caroline England will give a talk called From divorce lawyer to Duchess of the Dark Domestic Noir.

Kath Wareham

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

High Lane u3a Member, Ben Alexander, recently celebrated his eightieth birthday by inviting friends from U3A, colleagues from Stockport Hydro, friends from other circles and his family to a nostalgic afternoon of the silver-screen cinema at the Regent Cinema in Marple. Invitations said *strictly no presents* but instead guests were asked to make a donation to the Mayor of Stockport's Charity.



A packed audience was taken back in time to news from immediate post-war 1946, a 1940's cartoon and the main film, Casablanca, which surprisingly many were seeing for the first time. The event raised a fabulous £2,000 which will be divided between *Signpost for Carers* and *Moya Cole* (formerly known as St Annes Hospice.)

GROUP NEWS

ART

As promised in the August newsletter here are some of the summer challenge works. The challenge was to use collage to portray a place you had been over the summer. I was really impressed with how inventive people were and all the results were wonderful. I'm sure you will agree.



This month we had another workshop with Julia Borodina. This was about, layering paint so that some of the previous colours remained visible. The subject was Snowdonia viewed from Llandwyn island on Anglesey. We started with a completely orange board and painted the scene leaving glimpses of the orange peeping through which added a wonderful warmth to the paintings. There was a lot of work involved, and we all decided that we would finish our pieces off over the next weeks rather than rush them. Hopefully I will include a photo next month and the originals will be on display at our annual exhibition next February. Here are some photos of the workshop.



And Julia's part and fully finished paintings



Madeleine Hennessey

BACKGAMMON

I am pleased to announce that Backgammon will be resuming this Wednesday the 30th at 2pm in the Bull's Head, High Lane, after the pub's refurbishment, looking forward to seeing the changes. We are a dwindling group and would welcome anyone that fancies giving it a try. No experience needed as we can teach you as we go along.

Ken Jackson

BALLROOM DANCING

Ballroom dancing restarted in September with Kate and Ian leading the dancing, whilst Walter's cataract op recovery continued. A full meeting on the 25th was bittersweet, as we paused to reflect on Brian's unexpected death, but later toasted Freda and Walter on their 65th wedding anniversary.

Walter Mason

CANASTA

The Canasta group is still going strong every Tuesday evening at the Royal Oak pub. We play from 7 till 9 and there is no charge other than buying a drink at the bar. We are a friendly, casual group and if you would like to learn the game you can just turn up and we will teach you.

Pauline Wright

CHURCHES AND PUBS

Christ Church, Burbage

The next Churches and Pubs is on Wednesday November 4th to Burbage, about two minutes drive from the Pavilion Gardens in Buxton.

The pub is close by, and we will have the menu for the u3a meeting in October. It will be three courses for £23. Please bring the money (cash only please) to the October monthly meeting.

Paul and Barbara

CRIME FICTION READING

Our book for September was *Past Lying* by Val McDermid, the seventh of eight books in the Karen Pirie series, many of which have been televised by ITV. Set in Edinburgh during the Covid lockdown of 2020, the novel follows Detective Chief Inspector Karen Pirie, head of the Historic Cases Unit, as she investigates a cold case that unexpectedly becomes active again. A recently deceased crime writer leaves an unfinished manuscript that tells a story which closely relates to the case of Lara Hardie, a university student who disappeared a year earlier. As the investigation progresses, there are quite a few twists and turns before the case is concluded.

Most of our group liked the book and appreciated the quality of the writing. Some found the couple of sub plots unnecessary and distracting. During Covid, Karen was living in her boyfriend's flat with her DS, Daisy; the boyfriend was in Scotland on a farm. We felt this was an odd situation. We also noted that, in pursuance of the case, Karen used her police status to get round Covid restrictions.

Our next meeting will be on Wednesday 21st October when we will be discussing *Dark Rooms* by Lynda La Plante, a Jane Tennison book from 2023.

Diane Saxon

DINING

This past summer the Dining Group imagined they were on holiday. In May we went to Turkey, in July to Spain and in September we ended our holiday in Italy.

All three venues were new to us. Some of us had never tasted Turkish food and we were pleasantly surprised; it was so tasty. We resolved to visit Topkapi again. In July we were at Taptu. Here we tried Tapas, all different tastes, and great for sharing. Again, for some it was a new experience.

Olivae, on the A6 in Disley, was our Italian meal and did we enjoy it. Thirty members arrived on September 15 to be met at the door by a member of staff, our tables were all laid out as requested and we were by the window. The three-course meal was excellent as were the staff. We had six waiters looking after us, including the manager, and even the chef came out to check everyone was happy.

Dorothy Neillands
Dorothy Gerrard



GARDENING

The last garden meeting was held at Walter's. The autumnal Michaelmas daisies were quite behind this year, as were golden rod varieties, but there was still plenty of colour around. A gardener had kept the garden in reasonably good order, to make up for Walters current inability to garden.

The group discussed a Christmas meal venue, to round off the year's events.



Walter Mason

Space for a limerick from Google Gemini! AI knows about u3a!

At High Lane Village Hall they all meet,
For speakers and tea-time sweet treats
From bridge to a stroll,
Every group finds its role,
And retirement feels double as sweet!

HISTORY

A Year in History

We had decided that September's meet would consist of members discussing the events of a year of their choice. Interestingly, each speaker chose a different approach.

Marlene provided a review of the significant events of 1935: in retrospect, it can be seen that many events were precursors to the forthcoming war years. Britain and Germany signed an agreement that limited the size of the German navy (flagrantly ignored!) and the Merlin aircraft engine made its first flight. In November, it powered the Hawker Hurricane aircraft, which was synonymous with the 'Battle of Britain'. The Silver Jubilee of George V was celebrated and the Conservative Party, under Stanley Baldwin, was elected to govern Britain – this was the last general election until 1945.

The next contributor was Betty, who chose 1920 as the focal year for a discussion on the development of Poynton. A settlement was first noted in the 13th century as held by the dec Stockport family, who were succeeded in 1382 by the Warren family until eventually passed to the Vernons in 1826. Coal was found in the 16th century and mined until closure in 1935. Following the development of private house building in the late 19th century, Poynton has largely transformed into a suburban commuter town.

The final contributor, Barry, chose the year 1916 and concentrated on the events during Easter Week, when a group of armed men seized the main post office on the Monday, while other groups seized strategic locations in the City in an attempt to stimulate a nationwide uprising against British rule. It was hoped that this would be supported by a shipment of weapons from Germany, in a deal negotiated by Roger Casement. However, the ship carrying the guns was sunk by the Royal Navy and Casement captured. Thus, by the following Saturday, the occupants of the General Post Office were forced to surrender. The leaders, including Casement, were executed after being found guilty by secret military courts and were executed within a few weeks.

We only had time for these three presentations and so will continue next month (Wednesday October 28). You are welcome to join us and, perhaps, speak on a year of your choice.

Barry

PHOTOGRAPHY

This month's topic for the group was STOCKPORT. I never knew Stockport could look so good. Thanks for all the entries.

1st ... Market and St Mary's wet night scene 8 points Ken

2nd ... A6 aerial view 6 points ... Anthony

3rd ... joint places all with 4 points each ... The Chestergate Helen

Crowther St Ken

Viaduct Park Diane



Next month's topic is AUTUMN. Entries by October 22nd please.
Once again, thanks for all the pics, keep 'em coming!

Ken Jackson

MEMOIRS

Unfortunately, we were unable to have a meeting this month due to an accident. The next meeting is on Tuesday, October 6th at 2 pm in the small hall.

QUOTE FOR THE MONTH

I have two quotes this month from the lovely Dolly Parton who will be greatly missed.

If you want the rainbow, you gotta put up with the rain.

If you see somebody without a smile, give 'em yours.

Barbara Kenneth

QUIZZING

The quiz group is restarting and will meet on 29th October at 10am. New members will be very welcome to join our restart. Please get in touch if you would like to come.

This month's puzzles:

Forwards I am heavy, backward I am not. What am I?

What five-letter word has one left when two letters are removed?

If two's company, and three's a crowd, what are four and five?

Diane Saxon

READING

Our book for September was UNDER THE GREENWOOD TREE by Thomas Hardy. This was one of his early novels written when he had yet to acquire world-wide fame. It tells of village life at a time of great change, when the local church was about to acquire an organ which would lead to the demise of the choir and its musical contribution to the services. It is also the love story of Dick Dewey and the local schoolmistress, Fancy Day, which is not without its drama, but all ends happily, unlike many of Hardy's novels. Ian, who chose the book, was extremely well versed in early church music in rural churches and we all learned a lot about musical instruments no longer in use, but then an integral part of village life.

Our book for October is ETHAN FROME by Edith Wharton.

Marlene Brookes

SHORT WALKS

Saturday 19 September was looking more Autumnal as the group set off from Russell Avenue, High Lane. Walking along the Macclesfield canal towards Marple we then crossed the stone bridge to pass Windlehurst Hall and onward through a gate to follow a track left and upward until a stile was reached. After



'much ado' about managing the stile, we followed a field footpath over another field passing through a gate onto another field (much to our surprise gravel had been placed over what used to be a very muddy dip).



Linking to another track and footpath the group passed by renovated cottages (we had a peep through the windows). Sheltered by a hedge whilst a shower descended on us on our way to Turf Lea. Walking into Turf Lea down the road which eventually turned into yet another track and footpath up to Disley Golf club. From here we walked down Carr Brow through the housing estate and back to Russell Avenue.

Ruth Smith

SKY WATCHING

This month weather permitting, we may see The Orionid meteor shower. This starts October 2nd and continues into November with a peak around 21st October. The shower happens as the Earth passes through trails of debris left behind by Halley's comet. You'll need to find somewhere dark and away from artificial lights and allow your eyes time to adjust.

And another limerick from Google Gemini!
Old Halley swept past overhead,
Where dust toward Earth softly fled.
The Orionids gleam
In a delicate stream,
And slip away silent instead.

TRAVEL

May	Liverpool day trip	Please let us know if you would like to go.
June 13th– 18th	Isle of Man	£50 Deposit at October meeting
August or September	Fred Olsen Cruise from Liverpool. Norway	Please let us know if you would like to go.

During the recent Lake District holiday, we visited Grasmere to see Dove Cottage, the much-loved former home of the celebrated poet William Wordsworth. Sheila Small has put pen to paper to tell the story of our visit.

Dove Cottage

William Wordsworth, a poet you know
 Lived at Dove Cottage for over eight years
 During which time his fame would grow
 A gift from friend Coleridge paid all the rent
 To support Will's poetry, it was sent
 He married Mary whom he held very dear
 Their love for each other was very clear
 Having five children but losing two
 His writing reflected the grief that he knew
 But also in nature great joy he found
 He sat in his garden to hear every sound
 We all know of clouds and daffodils fine
 But William's favourite flower was the lesser
 celandine
 Of the worth of lowly folk he wrote many lines
 Sending 'The Prelude'; to Parliament, a sign of
 the times
 Dove Cottage built of stone
 Upstairs and downstairs a family home
 All nurtured William's poems
 Some penned in the shade of the rowans
 He said that poetry heals minds
 With childhood the most precious time
 Poems written at the kitchen table
 Son beside him playing games

Devoted father he was able
 To give his time while inspiration came
 Wordsworth's words we well remember
 With us all year from spring to December
 We left Dove Cottage bound for Keswick
 Shops to see and cafes to visit
 Encountering many cars on bridges
 Driving very close to edges
 Betty, a quivering jelly, me a nervous wreck
 Are we safe? we need to check
 Of course.
 We were rescued by Carl our driver.
 Clearly a calm skilful survivor.
 We walked in the town.
 Shops the aforementioned magnet.
 Some of us hoping to fill our basket.
 Some went round the park.
 With views of the lake.
 A break at a cafe
 Tea and cake to partake.
 Back on the coach tired but happy.
 Seen so much we are still chatty.
 With thoughts of dear Wordsworth on our
 minds.
 A more contented crowd you could not find.

Sheila Small

WALKING

Arriving at the Royal Hotel in Hayfield while it was pouring with rain, the idea of water sports rather than walking seemed to be the order of the day a promise of fine weather did not. The magnificent seven arrayed in their finest waterproof gear set off along the river Kinder, undismayed and determined to make the best of the morning.



Houses and down to the bridal way at Tunstead House. It was a tiring walk along the rising bridal way to Mount Famine, but the views made the effort worthwhile.

After walking for half a mile, the clouds parted and the sun decided to make an appearance and at Bowden bridge the waterproofs departed and tee shirts became the fashionable option. Crossing the bridge and following the river, we recrossed at Booth (sheep wash) and followed the path to Hill



After lunch we descended past the old quarry crossing the road to Peep O Day farm heading north to the remains of Phoside mill, a water powered cotton mill built in the 1760's but later made redundant with the introduction of steam power.

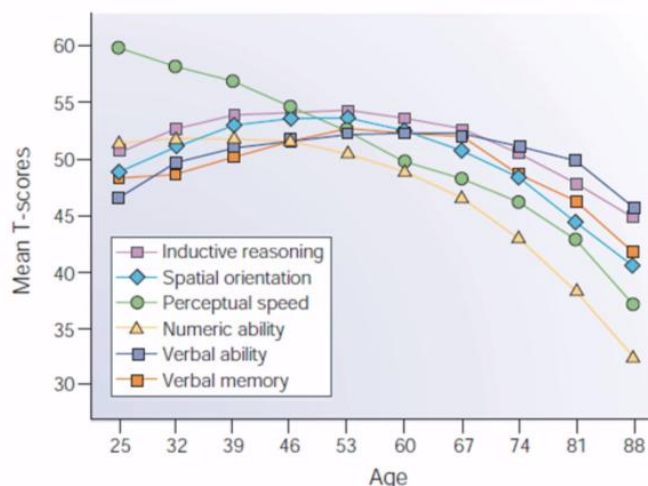
Returning to Hayfield in the warm sunshine we all concluded that despite the wet start it was a very enjoyable day out, and even the low turnout did not dampen our spirits.

Thank you and well done the magnificent seven.

Ian Hope

National Office Learning Activities for October

I joined a number of the talks during the last month. Each talk lasts around an hour. I've been on a tour of the Galapagos islands, learned about the Vikings, and spent a fascinating hour exploring research into the brain and aging. The graph shows the decline in the various abilities as we age. Food for thought! I've also joined an IGO online TaiQiGong group. All the talks are very well delivered and interesting.



A selection of the events for October.

- 5 Oct A history of the world according to sheep
- 6 Oct First light: the formation of the first stars, blackholes, and galaxies
- 8 Oct Darkness on the edge of town: Bruce Springsteen and the American dream
- 13 Oct Your guide to feeling connected in a digital world
- 21 Oct Keeping warm and cutting energy bills: Practical advice and support
- 21 Oct Delivered to your door – the complexities of efficient parcel delivery
- 22 Oct David Hockney as I knew him

All are free via Zoom. Click here for details and to book a place.

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

OCTOBER EVENTS

The Battle of Hastings took place on 14th October 1066. This is depicted in the Bayeux tapestry, currently residing in the British Museum.



Bayeux Tapestry Museum, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

Greenwich Mean Time was formally adopted as the global standard for timekeeping and navigation on 13th October 1884.

The first escalator in Britain was opened at Earl's Court tube station on 4th October 1911.

The breathalyser was introduced by Transport Minister, Barbara Castle, on 9th October 1967.

The Beatles' first single Love me do was released on 5 October 1952.