



Newsletter

October 2025



Inside this month

From the Editor
From the Chair
Monthly meeting
Entertainment evening
Group activities
u3a Matter magazine
u3a National events
Draconid meteor shower

FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the October edition of the High Lane u3a newsletter. As always, thanks to the group leaders and contributors for their articles and photographs. If your group hasn't been featured for a while why not send me an update for a future edition?

In this edition, we have information about recent activities of our interest groups, including reports and photographs of the places visited during the recent Travel group holiday to Ireland. Our chair, Paul, reminds us about the entertainment evening later this month and there is information about a National Office learning event about support for Windows 10 you may be interested in joining. This month's cover photo shows members enjoying a trip in Cork harbour during the recent Ireland holiday.

Attached to the newsletter email is the latest National Office Friends bitesize newsletter. This contains reports of many varied activities taking place in u3as across the country.

The next issue of our newsletter will be November 2025. Please send me your contributions by October 30th at newslettereditor@highlaneu3a.org.uk.

Diane Saxon

FROM THE CHAIR

I think we have just about finished with the really good weather we have experienced this summer. The last couple of weeks have given us some well needed rain and the gardens are looking well-watered. Unfortunately, the local reservoirs are still quite low.

As we are getting towards the end of the year, we have only one event left. The music evening on Friday 24th October at the village hall features Nancy Ann Lee plus a two-course meal for £25. Sixties music at its best. Nancy has been our guest before, and everyone said what an excellent evening it was. If anyone would like to bring a friend to the evening. Please do. October's meeting is the last time to buy a ticket or if you can't make the meeting speak to a committee member and they will organise a ticket for you. Please remember to bring your own drinks and glasses.

Please don't forget to bring money to pay for all the trips you plan to go on.
Thanks

Paul Kenneth

MONTHLY MEETING

The speaker at the September meeting was Peter Turner and his talk was entitled Through the eyes of a magician. The title was a bit misleading as he does not really define himself as a magician. He likes to think of himself as an engineer of the impossible and his definition of magic is something which defies logic. He challenged us to be open minded and to rethink our presumptions. He performed several illusions ably helped by three of our Pams and one Paula! Everyone was suitably amazed and obviously tried to see how they were done but he ably led us away from the solutions. We were left with the question he asked at the beginning. Do we believe in magic?

The speaker at the 8th October meeting is David Seddon whose talk is entitled Why do we go to school?

Kath Wareham

ENTERTAINMENT EVENING

Last chance to get your ticket. Nancy Ann Lee, otherwise known as Little Miss Sixties, who we had a few years ago, is coming to entertain us again on Friday October 24th. She was a great success, so if you want a good evening put this date in your diary. Tickets on sale now, cost £25

Doors open at 6.30pm and we will eat at 7pm. Please bring your own drinks and glasses.

The menu is

Irish Tavern Pie / Lasagne / Veg Lasagne

Apple Pie and cream / Pavlova with fresh fruit and cream

FYI The Irish Tavern Pie consists of beef cooked in Guinness, with carrots, onions and shallots with a pastry top and served with red cabbage. We had it last year and it was very tasty.

BRITISH SIGN LANGUAGE WORKSHOP

I have certificates for the people who attended the workshop. If you have not been given yours, please see me at the u3a meeting.

Barbara Kenneth

GROUP NEWS

BACKGAMMON

Unfortunately, backgammon was cancelled for the last session due to holidays and hospital appointments. We will resume on Wednesday the 8th October at 2 pm in the Bull's Head, High Lane.
All welcome.

Ken Jackson

CHURCHES AND PUBS

September visit

The visit this month was to St Lawrence's Church which stands in the grounds of Peover Hall. Lunch was at the Churchill Tree in Alderley Park. Twenty-four people enjoyed the church and lunch afterwards.

St Lawrence's church dates from mid-14th century and was built as a chapel for the Peover Estate although there was a church on this site in the 12th century which was destroyed, and no trace remains. The estate was given to the Mainwarings by William the Conqueror for their services in the Norman conquests. The tower was built of brick in 1739 and has three bells. The original middle part of the church would at one time have been Tudor black and white as in St Oswald's in Lower Peover but that was demolished, and the nave and chancel were rebuilt in brick by William Turner in 1811.



Randle Mainwaring and his wife, Margery were responsible for building the church. There have been various additions and renovations but the two Mainwaring chapels, built of stone, have been preserved. The south chapel is the older and was built in 1456. The South Chapel contains alabaster effigies of Randle and Margery. The Mainwarings owned the estate until the 1800s.

The North Chapel was built in 1648 by Ellen the widow of Philip Mainwaring to house his monument. The chapel contains effigies of Philip Mainwaring and his wife. The chapel also contains two alabaster monumental slabs, the earlier depicts John Mainwaring, Knight, who died in 1515 and his wife Katherine who died in 1529. The later depicts another Philip Mainwaring, who died in 1573, and his wife Anne.



The nave contains a 15th century font. There are several stained-glass windows and a banner depicting St George is displayed. One of the stained-glass windows contains a picture of Samuel Beckett; this is the only church to have a picture of Samuel Beckett because many were destroyed under Henry VIII. This window is made of a collage of pieces of glass from other places. On the rear wall of the nave is a coat of arms of Charles II which has been displayed there since the 1660s. On the left-hand wall of the nave, hangs the American flag. This is the only parish church in the UK which is allowed to have an American flag, and it is because General Patton and his soldiers were billeted in Peover Hall, and the soldiers worshipped in the church. A nearby hostelry, The Bells of Peover, which dates back to 1839 was where Eisenhower and Patton planned the D-Day landings which ultimately ended World War 2.



Peover Hall is open to the public on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from May to September, but tours must be booked and there is limited availability.

Mark Saxon

The last Churches and Pubs meeting is December 3rd to St. Mary's at Lymm.

See Pam Cooke at the October and November monthly meeting and put your name down.

Please make sure you have your names down and money to pay for the meals when you book. Thanks.

Paul Kenneth

CURRENT AFFAIRS

1. What did we think about unite rally organised by Tommy Robinson

The papers and most of the media would be better ignoring him, but unfortunately his popularity sells a lot of papers and he also gets shown on TV at his rallies.

2 Antisocial Behaviour

In some areas of the country, young children in their neighbourhood are causing a lot of disrupting behaviour and making the lives of the residents intolerable. The police are called in but most of the children are under 14 and they don't want to criminalise them. The children doing all the trouble have no respect for the law or their neighbours.

3 Eurovision Song Contest

Should countries withdraw from the Eurovision Song Contest if Israel take part. Most of us at the meeting didn't watch it so we were not bothered about the decision.

4 State Visit of Donald Trump

We got a few concessions from the President on steel. The Royal Family welcomed him at Windsor with all the pageantry that he loves. The press seemed to concentrate on Melania Trumps hat and what the Duchess of Wales was wearing at the State Banquet.

5 Mayor of Henley

The Mayor of Henley was criticised for wearing casual clothes during a parade with cadets from Royal Marines, army and air cadets. It seems that casual wear instead of suits and ties for men is now more acceptable in the work place.

6 Pronouncement of I.D Cards

It will be good Idea for some things and make it easier for people who are getting jobs, the black economy those who have overstayed their visas, accessing the NHS but there is still a lot information we need to know about it before any decisions are made.

7 Northern Network

Will the Northern Network get the investment they need to upgrade the rail lines. We didn't think it would be due to spiralling costs to upgrade it. A lot of money has been spent in the past buying up homes for land and nothing was done.

8. Andy Burnham

Would Andy Burnham be a better replacement for Sir Keir Starmer. We think he should keep on being Mayor of Manchester as we don't think he is experienced enough for the job of P.M. He would be a big loss to Manchester if it did happen.

9 Why do immigrants want to come to the UK

The reasons they come to the UK is mainly for the English language, a better life for their family especially for those who have flown from war torn countries, the NHS, Education, Work, and connect with family already residing here.

10. Peace

Did we think that there will be peace in the Middle East, we don't think that there will be peace. We can only hope that peace will come someday soon.

Angela Knight

CRIME FICTION READING

The crime fiction book group's August/September read was *Our House* by Louise Candlish.

Fi returns home from holiday to find another family has moved into her home in London. It transpires that the new occupants of her house have the Land Registry certificate and believe that their purchase was done correctly – all without Fi's knowledge.

The chilling story that unfolds involves Fi's husband, Bram, and some very unsavoury characters that both Fi and Bram become involved with. There is a shocking twist at the end of the tale, just when the reader thinks there may be a glimmer of light at the end of the tunnel for Fi.

This book engendered a lot of conversation among the seven of us in the group; a page turner for the four of us who really enjoyed the book but dislike from the other three.

Our next meeting will be on 14 November when we will have two books to discuss: Agatha Christie's *4:50 from Paddington* and *The Janus Stone* by Elly Griffiths. Would you like to join us? We have space for a few more members.

Betty Mackman

GERMAN

We continue to meet every Friday morning. We've recently had visits from two of the group who have moved south to be nearer families. Recent holidays have been discussed in detail, and our beginner continues to make good progress.

Marlene Brookes

MEMOIRS

The next meeting is on Tuesday 7th October. The suggested topic is Weddings.

Barbara Kenneth

PHOTOGRAPHY

This month's topic was "FARM ANIMALS" and we had some good entries.

1st was The Master, by Anthony Berry

2nd was Chestnut Mare, by Ken Jackson.

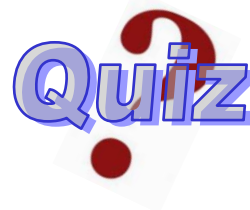
3rd was Motherly Love, by Barbara Mcartney.



This month's topic is Halloween. If anybody would like to enter, send three pictures to me at photographygroupleader@highlaneu3a.org.uk by the 23rd of October.

Ken Jackson

QUIZZING



This month's quiz was quite a challenge, and we thank Margaret for the interesting mix of questions which included History, Sport, Largest lakes, TV and Names beginning with T.

Some for you

Prime minister immediately before Margaret Thatcher

Venue for the next summer Olympics

Stockport born boxer who died this month

Welsh singer whose name begins with T

Actor who played Mr Bates in the Post Office programmes

Husband of Princess Ann's daughter

And do you know the largest lakes in Ireland, Wales, England, Canada, Hungary, and Switzerland. I didn't!

We have two more meetings this year and would welcome members who might like to come along and see what we do. We have many kinds of questions; every quiz is different. The next meeting is 10am on 16th October. Please contact me if you would like more information.

Diane Saxon

READING

At our last meeting we discussed A TIME OF GIFTS by Patrick Leigh Fermor who in 1933 at the age of 19 decided to travel mainly on foot from London to Istanbul with an allowance of £4 a month. He describes in detail his experiences en route and the kindness and hospitality he received from so many people he encountered with occasional reminders of the turbulent political situation of the time. He ends this first book of a trilogy on the Danube at Esztergom. As a well-connected member of society, he did stay in castles and noble houses but also in cowsheds and village inns. Not every member of the group enjoyed this book as his descriptions were sometimes a bit overwrought, but it was much appreciated by those of us who know these parts of Europe, off the normal tourist track.

Our next meeting is on Monday 6th October when we will be discussing THE INSTRUMENTALIST by Harriet Constable which recounts the story of a foundling in Venice who gains fame as a violinist and composer under the tutelage of a composer who is never named but whom we assume to be Vivaldi.

Marlene Brookes

SHORT WALKS



Five intrepid walkers set out from New Mills. Despite the weather forecast, it was kind to us, warm and light, perfect for walking, if not rather muddy underfoot.

The walk took us along the river towards Whaley where we passed the Llamas and interesting artwork displayed at the farm for New Mills Art Trail. Ascending the hill to the canal, with fine views over to the church with the golden cockerel, past the dangerous giant hogweed, eventually reaching home of the Love Hearts at Swizzels factory.

From there we walked the road to Torr Mill with its very good facilities and view of the

millennium Bridge. Here we stopped for coffee before descending the very steep steps onto a bridge over the river. At this point it began to rain so we walked across the Millennium bridge, stopping to view another art installation comprising colourful birds and spiders. We also spied the heron in his perfectly still pose awaiting a tasty fish.

Onwards to the hydro, pausing to watch mad people with ropes abseiling! Then, returning along the river and upwards to our start point. A good chatty walk was had, very enjoyable and we were so lucky not to get soaked.

I shortened the walk as Mike had had enough, but everyone was happy, and we arrived back at 12 noon.

Deirdre Nicholls

The u3a magazine: u3a Matters

The Autumn edition has recently been sent to subscribers. The highlights are available online at [u3a – u3a matters](#)

You can subscribe to get the full version posted direct to your homes; five editions for just £4 by contacting the membership secretary. Each edition features stories about u3a activities and members, celebrity interviews and articles on many different subjects.



TRAVEL

IRELAND September 1st – 5th

After a short flight from Manchester, we arrived in Cork where Graham and his minibus were waiting. It was a triumph of logistics to fit 16 of us and our luggage into the space in the bus. From the airport we drove into the centre of Cork to the English Market so called because it was founded in 1788 when the city was controlled by the English Protestant Corporation and England ruled Ireland. We were particularly impressed by the fish stalls portraying a wonderful variety of fish including a large very ugly monkfish. One stallholder said she had worked there for 40 years when there were over 20 meat stalls but now only two. Asked for the reason. She said- supermarkets! After our visit we continued to the Springfort Hall Hotel, one of the best we have ever stayed in in Ireland, with huge bedrooms, a lounge they called the withdrawing room and very friendly staff.

KING JOHN'S CASTLE

The building of King John's Castle commenced in 1212 in Limerick on the banks of the River Shannon. It has a very turbulent history which was shown with video images, descriptions and dramatic sounds. The castle is surrounded by archaeological buildings and structures that pre-date Norman times and built by Viking settlers who intermarried with the local population. After 800 years the castle stands proud in the heart of Limerick City as a National Monument. A very interesting visit.



NANO NAGLE BIRTHPLACE

After leaving the castle we had a two-hour coach drive. This seemed a little confusing. It should have taken about 45 minutes. Did the driver lose his way? Something wrong with his Satnav?

We eventually arrived at the Birthplace of Nano Nagle, a pleasant house. We were welcomed by a lovely informative lady who showed us round. I had not heard of Nano Nagle, but our guide told us about her very interesting life. Born in 1718 on an Irish farm part of the estate of her ancestors, she was called Honoria and came from a very wealthy family. When she was ten years old, she was sent to France but returned to Ireland when she was twenty-eight. Catholics were not allowed to be educated in Ireland at that time. She became a social reformer educating the Catholic poor which was against the law.

The main centre of the exhibition was a beautiful window designed to look like stained glass made by Desmond King 200 years after her death. This showed her whole life in pictures and was fascinating in the detail. The more you looked the more you noticed. Nano Nagle set up seven schools, five for girls and two for boys, without letting her family know. She founded the Presentation Congregation with three other women which is still educating children around the world. An amazing lady!

THE MICHAEL COLLINS CENTRE

The Centre is in the Collins family homestead at Castlevue about 5km northeast of the seaside resort of Clonakilty. It is run by Tim Crowley, a distant relative of Michael Collins aided by his wife Dolores, both passionate about the stories they tell. Tim uses the traditional Irish method of storytelling with photographs a slide show and artefacts to take us into the world of Michael Collins from his birth in 1890 the youngest of eight children, his education and early life, his political and military career, his part in the treaty of Independence to his death in 1922.

The museum has an extensive collection of paintings, photographs and artefacts associated with the 1916 rebellion, the Irish war of independence and Irish civil war and Collins himself. There are small collections relating to Henry Ford and John F Kennedy both of whom had local connections. We left understanding much more about Irish twentieth century history.

We then went into Clonakilty a delightful town where we had time for lunch and look round the centre of the town. Michael Collins spent two years at the local school enabling him to pass the Post Office exams which led to him going to England for a spell. He lived with one of his sisters for two years and this house has now been turned into a museum whilst nearby there is a statue erected by the local Civic Society to honour the area's most famous son.

CLONAKILTY DISTILLERY

Wednesday afternoon found us at Clonakilty Distillery founded by the Scully family. They have farmed the land on the southwest tip of Southern Ireland for nine successive generations. In 2016 they decided to diversify and concentrate on Whiskey production. They began growing a strain of heritage malt barley on their coastal land round the Galley Lighthouse where the rich soil combined with the salty air and sea mist infuse grain enabling the production of their Award-Winning Whiskeys. They are triple distilled and then aged in oak casks for at least three years and one day, sometimes up to five years.

James, the marketing manager, led us on a very interesting tour of the distillery ending with a tasting session. We then staggered back to the coach for the journey back to our hotel after another most enjoyable day.



CORK HARBOUR CRUISE

On Thursday morning our group went along to Cork Harbour for a two-hour cruise. Cork is a natural harbour and estuary at the mouth of the River Lee. It is supposed to be the second largest natural harbour in the world after Sydney. It has been a working port, a strategic defensive hub and source of employment for centuries. We sailed



past many landmarks; Blackrock Castle built as coastal defence fortification in the 16th century and now an observatory, Spice Island which has been a prison for hundreds of years housing convicts before penal transportation, IRA prisoners and once the largest prison in the world. Having visited both in 2018 it was interesting to see a view of them from the river. We also passed Haulbowline Island initially a base for the British Army and now home of the Irish Navy.



FOTA WILDLIFE PARK

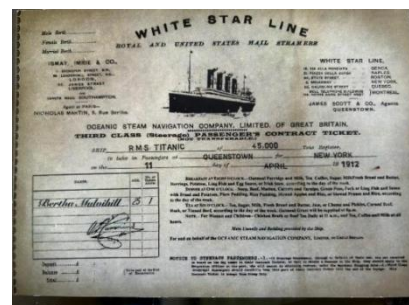
On Thursday afternoon we visited the Wildlife Park on Fota Island opened in June 1983 for the purpose of Conservation, Education, Research and Breeding of endangered species with animals coming from zoos and rescue centres. Many animals and birds are able to roam freely about the park. Some travelled on a little train costing €1 passing black and grey ostriches, giraffes, and zebra in a large open paddock, Humboldt penguins in a rocky area with water, a pride of lions in the shade of trees and a large pelican resting on a bench seat and later walking along by the lake.

We were entertained by a wallaby and her full-grown joey, a group of long tailed lemurs leaping up trees and ropes and large monkeys and gibbons accessing islands and walkways high in the trees. We were able to watch the meerkats before departing to our hotel for an excellent evening meal.



TITANIC EXPERIENCE, COBH

Cobh was literally the last “port of call” of our Ireland trip. We entered the “Titanic Experience” and were all issued our tickets, replicas of the original passengers with a name, age and class of travel which caused some amusement among us comparing our tickets. My ticket was for Bertha Mulvilhill, aged 25 travelling on her own in third class steerage who we were informed had more fun than the other two classes, making their own entertainment, dancing and singing in their accommodation. The Titanic left Southampton, called at Cherbourg and then picked up 123 passengers at Cobh. It gave you a personal view into the lives and their journey a different perspective of most Titanic accounts with very good videos and photographs which conveyed the people travelling from Cobh on their ill-fated journey. The final exhibit was a large board with all the Cobh passenger names, their class and whether they survived or were lost. It was poignant to observe that many were lost, particularly the men that had embarked. Bertha I was pleased to see had survived and went on to marry an Englishman with a happy family life.



We then had time for a leisurely lunch and relaxation on the harbour front where we challenged each other to identify the foreign flags flying from the harbour front before catching our coach back to Cork Airport.

So it was goodbye to Ireland with its lovely people and their “You’re welcome, no problem at all”.

Contributions from

Pam Cooke, Tony Cummings, Ann Daniels, Andrew Dugdale, Loanne Collins, Diana Moore, Betty Smith, Janet Vockings, Margaret Williams, Margaret McDermott

Holidays for 2026

January 26th	Potters resort Essex Balance October
June 29th	Cumbria and Lake District 4 nights at Damson Dene Hotel Bowness DEPOSIT NOVEMBER
July 17th	CRUISE FROM LIVERPOOL 8 nights Ireland and Scotland Fred Olsen, Bolette More information at October meeting
August 3rd	SCOTLAND 4 nights at Landmark Hotel Dundee. Includes visit to Edinburgh Tattoo DEPOSIT OCTOBER

WALKING

Walk 24 September 2025: Over Haddon– Youlgreave – Alport

On this pleasant autumnal day, eleven walkers set out on a circular route from Over Haddon, a small village above Lathkill Dale, in the limestone area of the Peak District. Notably, Sir Maurice Oldfield, former head of MI6 from 1973–78 and reputed inspiration for John le Carré's spymaster "Smiley," was born in Over Haddon. He was also credited with keeping with keeping Britain out of the Vietnam War.

From Over Haddon we made the steep descent to the Lathkill, a river somewhat unusual for its seasonal flow, parts disappearing underground in dry weather. An unexpected sight at this point was an exceptionally well renovated Austin Seven; time for a photo opportunity! It even had a sunroof fitted, though likely the smallest anyone had ever seen!



Much of the Lathkill has been dammed and straightened in the past to service the needs of historic lead mining, but this is now seen as detrimental to fish migration, particularly trout. The Wild Trout Trust has recommended that these weirs be removed; most likely this will never happen. Despite it not meeting the Environment Agency water quality criterium (mostly due to lead levels), it is known for its crystal clarity and rare aquatic life, including the white-clawed crayfish.

We crossed the Lathkill via the old stone footbridge and made our way up the south face of the dale, through Meadow Place Grange, and on to open fields for a coffee stop with panoramic views over the surrounding hills and moors.



Downhill again into Youlgreave, there was a welcomed stop to stock up on provisions for those that had forgotten their lunch, and for those that just fancied a bigger lunch! Another photo opportunity was had at the Youlgreave 'Fountain', a circular stone tank, built in 1829 after a campaign by the 'Friendly Society of Women' sought a better, healthier water supply than the River Bradford. It was a conduit head, receiving soft water from the surrounding hills.



Descending once again, we reached the River Bradford and could appreciate the desire to have a piped water supply rather than collect it from the river! The Bradford has similar geology to but is shorter than the Lathkill. It supports trout and grayling and some of the dammed parts form popular wild swimming and paddling spots. For us, one of them provided a tranquil lunch spot!



Suitably refreshed, we made our way along to the small village of Alport at the confluence of the Lathkill and Bradford rivers, then upstream along the Lathkill to cross it once again at Conksbury Bridge. From here our route was all uphill back to Over Haddon, but the climb adequately compensated by superb views of the river and welcome refreshments in the Lathkill Hotel!

Peter Wareham

NATIONAL OFFICE LEARNING EVENTS FOR OCTOBER

I have just picked a couple this month. Both are related to getting up to date with technology. **The first is useful for those of us who still have Windows 10. Remember it will still work after October 14th, but updates will no longer be provided. The talk is entitled 'Get the Latest Update on Accessing Support for Windows 10 Devices', and it runs from 1pm to 2.30 pm on 1st October.**

The second event comes from the AI-for-Everyone Project team, which is offering a short four-week course which will explore how to use AI and what AI can do for us as individuals. This starts on Friday, 10 October at 2 pm.

There are many other events on wide ranging topics. All are free via Zoom. Remember they can fill up quickly. Click here for details and to book a place.

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

DID YOU KNOW?

Every October, the Northern hemisphere is visited by the Draconid meteor shower. In 2025 the shower will be active between 6-10th October and will peak on 8th October. This year, the best time to see it will be in the evening, just after nightfall.