

New Mills and District



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

August
2016

Give us a wave!



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Here's to the future

From the
CHAIR

by ANN APPS

THIS year's AGM will be on November 15 so it is time to start thinking about next year's committee. I will definitely stand down as Chair, being in my fifth year and beyond my constitutional term of office.

It is likely that an existing committee member will stand for this role but we need a Deputy Chair. We also need to elect a Business Secretary and a Treasurer. The current officers intend to stand for re-election.

Several further committee members will be seeking re-election but we are always happy to welcome new members to the committee. Committee meetings are on the first Tuesday of each month. Committee members also help to run the monthly meetings and the coffee mornings, which provide opportunities to interact with new and existing members.

All committee members are trustees of the New Mills and District U3A. This is not as daunting as it sounds. Trustees of a charity are necessary to ensure funds are spent appropriately. Any liability is covered by insurance from the Third Age Trust.

Please let me, or any committee member, know if you are interested in joining our friendly committee, or would like more information.

We need a new Groups Coordinator

We are looking for a new Groups Coordinator because Barbara Morris will be

standing down in November from this role and from the committee. This is an important role. Our groups are the backbone of our U3A where we are able to learn together and socialise for the sheer joy of discovery.

The Groups Coordinator assists those who run groups, particularly when starting up a new group, as well as helping members and prospective members with enquiries about group membership.

It is not necessary for the Groups Coordinator to be a committee member, although committee membership is preferred. Please contact Barbara, or any committee member, if you wish to know more about this role. Thank you to Barbara for all the hard work she has done as Groups Coordinator.

Group attendance reminder

I would like to remind you again that it is courteous to give your apologies to a group coordinator if you are unable to attend a group meeting.

Also, please consider your commitment to a group when planning other activities. It is understandable that sometimes appointments cannot be arranged at another time, but if there is flexibility please think about your group attendance. If a group leader or a group member have put effort into preparing material for a group meeting it is disappointing if not many people come along to the meeting.



SPANISH

HERE are the members of the Spanish Group (Chris Jones, Sue Boothby, Rose Harrison and Judith Heyworth) who recently replaced an indoor lesson with the annual 'walk and talk' session. We decided on a short trip due to the hot weather! During the walk we endeavoured to speak Spanish for most of the time, which we noticed was an improvement from our first walk three years ago, so we must be learning something.

Sue Boothby

Make a date with the Annual Display

THE Groups Annual Display will be held on Tuesday, September 20 from 10am to noon.

The date has been moved from this month so that the Display forms part of New Mills Festival. We are hoping that the extra publicity will bring along new people to see what the U3A has to offer. The Festival runs from September 9-25. Also the extended opening time

will allow people more time to view the exhibits. So far a variety of Groups have taken the opportunity to reserve a table to showcase their Group but there is still time to reserve a table.

Please contact me if you would like to have a display or would like further information –

groupscoordinator@newmillsu3a.org.uk

Barbara Morris

WEBSITE: www.newmillsu3a.org.uk

Anyone
for table
tennis?



Why not give it a spin?

THE Table Tennis Group meets on the second Tuesday and fourth Thursday of each month from 2-4pm in the upper meeting room at the Uniting Church in Whaley Bridge.

We now have the use of two good quality tables with plenty of space around and would welcome more players.

So if you would like to relive your youthful playing days do come along and have a try. Don't be disappointed if the bat and ball seem to be much smaller and the net much higher than you recall, you will soon get back in the swing.

Recent research has indicated regularly playing table tennis is good for

TABLE TENNIS

your health, hand/eye co-ordination is improved, reaction time reduced, it burns off calories, balance is improved, mental alertness is maintained or increased and it is relatively easy on the joints.

The way we play - a sense of humour is essential. Where else can you get all these benefits for just £1 per two-hour session? Tea and biscuits are also available at a small extra cost to replace just a few of the lost calories.

Please contact me if you are interested in joining us.

Cliff Kemp

Cold War years 1945–1962

JESSICA Douthwaite, a PhD student with The Imperial War Museum and The University of Strathclyde, is looking to talk to anyone who has memories they would like to share about this period in history. She is interested in all aspects of daily and family life and can be contacted at: jessica.douthwaite@strath.ac.uk

Lesley Thompson

PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND RAILWAYS

Boats and buses ...

WE were lucky to have a fine sunny day in June for a trip to the Anderton Boat Lift.

This included a cruise on the Weaver Navigation as far as Northwich town centre. Then a trip in the boat lift, a piece of beautifully restored Victorian engineering. It was built in 1875 to lift cargo boats the 50 feet vertically from the Weaver Navigation to the Trent and Mersey Canal.

The visitor centre is interesting and there is a café and shop there too. If you haven't been I really recommend it.

We had an excellent visit in April to the Museum of Transport Greater Manchester at Cheetham Hill, enhanced by a museum volunteer who showed us around.

We saw a full range of buses, trams and trolley buses from all eras and areas of the



Entering the boat lift, above, and leaving, right, after the 50ft trip



All aboard for New Mills...

region. We travelled with Greater Manchester Wayfarer tickets which left us with plenty of further travel options after our visit.

These excellent pictures, including the bus to New Mills were taken by Alan Franklin.

Patrick Anderson



OUTINGS

FOLLOWING a very enjoyable Christmas concert last December at Gorton Monastery we returned to this magnificent venue last month for more music by Gorton Philharmonic Orchestra.

The first half included Peter And The Wolf superbly narrated by Wythenshawe-born actor David Schofield. The second half included the usual prom favourites, Elgar's Pomp and Circumstance March, Holst's Jupiter and Fantasia On British Sea Songs.

The audience were on their feet and there was much flag waving and singing. Local soprano Lorna Rushton led the singing of Jerusalem to conclude the programme. It was great way to spend a Sunday afternoon.

Outings are returning to the Monastery on November 27 for a performance of The Manchester Messiah and on December 9 we will be visiting the Bridgewater Hall for a Christmas Concert by St Ann's Hospice Festival Choir.

Barbara Matthews



Waving the flag at Gorton Monastery



Three pictures by John Edmunds taken during the June walk

RIGHT: A well-deserved rest

ABOVE: The big wheel at Rowarth

BELOW: Pine tree flower spike



Heading for the hills



WE'VE had a welcome increase in numbers this year for our rather small (by U3A standards) group.

In June we were joined by John Edmunds who brings his photographic expertise to our walks. We walked from Hayfield up to Matley Moor and on to Cown Edge, returning via Rowarth and Aspenshaw.

We are blessed with numerous local hills where we can enjoy panoramic views of the High Peak, Cheshire and the Southern Pennines. Many of these require quite an effort to reach them, but Cown Edge is one of the easier ones, if starting from the Monks road, above Charlesworth.

For July's walk we started at Ladybower and walked up to the ridge overlooking Alport Castles. There is of course no castle, just spectacular rock formations.

Further along there is now a hide for birdwatchers. We walked down Ditch

LONGER WALKS

Clough and had lunch near the Howden dam.

By a curious coincidence both John and I had seen a pair of Lancaster bombers in May, in my case they suddenly appeared from Kinder reservoir over Ashop Head. I was on my own on the Pennine Way returning from the Snake Pass. I guess they were training for display events this summer.

We returned to the start via the reservoirs on a mix of road and bridleway. I'd underestimated the length of the walk which was supposed to be 11 miles but turned out nearer to 13. Non-one complained, probably because it was perfect walking weather, clear skies, sunshine, and a cooling breeze. The great outdoors doesn't get any better than this.

David Jones

Field trips unearth ancient wonders

GEOLOGY

NINETEEN members of the Geology Group went on the July field trip.

The first stop was Odin Mine, near Castleton, where we found some of the lead ore - a heavy, grey mineral called galena that the miners had overlooked. We also found a small deposit of Blue John and some crystalline calcite, all evidence that millions of years ago mineralising fluids had streamed through faults and fractures in the host carboniferous limestone.

We then went to Windy Knoll where we saw an exhumed oil field. Formerly comprising light crude oil while it was still deep underground, it has turned into a heavy, rather rubbery bitumen called elaterite following uplift, erosion and exposure to the atmosphere. It resembled the equally abundant sheep droppings in the vicinity!

Our next stop was Mam Tor. It's not very often that you can sit in the middle of the road for lunch but we did here, as the road in question was closed in the 1970s due to

persistent land-slipping. Later we explored the lower slopes of Mam Tor, discussing the sedimentary structures and plant remains in the fallen blocks of sandstone. After that a lay-by on the other side of Mam Nick afforded us a vantage point from which to look at a number of landslip features that were generated during the melting of the last ice sheet, when the ground became quite unstable.

We could also see quite clearly the Edale Anticline, a structure that is conducive to trapping oil and gas. Encouraged by the oil at Windy Knoll and a 1919 discovery at Hardstoft, a well was drilled at Edale in 1938 but it turned out to be a "dry hole".

And then on to our last stop for the day, Bowden Bridge car park in Hayfield and

a walk to the quarry under White Brow from where the stone was extracted to build the Kinder Reservoir dam. Here we found clear evidence of faulting in which the movement was mainly horizontal. As at all the stops, we speculated on how the landscape had likely evolved over the 360 million years since the carboniferous

Pete Webb has taken over the Geology Group from Derek Brumhead who ran it for 10 years. Says Derek: "U3A members may be interested to know that I taught Pete 'O' level Geology 60 years ago. Now, after all those years, I am the student and he is the teacher!"



Geology Group members in action during the June field trip. PICTURE: Chris Walton

limestone was deposited, when our part of the world lay on the equator!

Life and death

THE Geology Group field trip in June saw 22 members looking at fossils in the carboniferous limestone at Miller's Dale Quarry, speculating on the conditions under which these creatures lived and died some 360-330 million years ago.

The locality is in a Derbyshire Wildlife Trust Nature Reserve, a fine site for orchids and one which has played host to nesting peregrine falcons in past years as well.

We then moved on to Ravenstor and the Monsal Trail where we examined lava flows and discussed how rocks become folded and faulted.

The final stop of the day was a sand pit where we examined sands of the Brassington Formation deposited around a mere five million years ago (!) in river systems that ran all the way from the Scottish Highlands to the North Sea and the English Channel.

Sands like these probably once covered much of mainland Britain but were largely removed during the Ice Age. The ones we saw had formerly been quarried to use in the local firebrick industry, but this was discontinued in the 1970s. As at Miller's Dale Quarry there was much else to see in the form of wild flowers (who expected to see heather growing in the middle of the White Peak?) and communities of newts. And on top of all that - it didn't rain!

Pete Webb

New technology, who needs it?

MANY people in the “third age” of life struggle with technology. Screens, buttons, keyboards, emails (what’s wrong with phoning someone or popping round to their house to tell them your news?), tablets (I take enough of them, thank you), i-pads, smartphones, social media - the list is endless. And do any of these things improve our lives?

Well, yes they can, and do. Admittedly, technology is great when it works, and when things go wrong you might have to call on the 12-year-old grandson to sort it for you, but otherwise technology is a fantastic resource if we use it according to our needs.

Of course, nothing replaces a personal visit and a face-to-face conversation, but with family and friends now spread across the country – even across the globe – technology can bring you closer than ever.

You CAN exist without it – but for how long? Bank branches are closing, as are travel agent shops, and high street stores can only stock a fraction of the goods they

... more and more of us it seems, so the older generation shouldn't miss out

actually have available, so if you are one of those people who “likes to see before they buy”, you might be disappointed to find that you can’t actually see much at all, because the full range of things is “online”.

I’m no techno-wizard, but I do have a smartphone. I can text people (free) when they are out shopping and they can choose whether or not to reply to me then, or later when it is convenient. I can text or email people at 6am (if I were an early bird) and they can pick up the message at 9am if they are not early birds. I can text or email people at 2am (I am a late bird) and they can pick up the message next morning or afternoon.

I don’t have a tablet (other than the

OUR October monthly meeting will welcome the ever popular speaker, Edwina Currie (right). Her talk is entitled Growing Old Disgracefully. I expect this to be as interesting and amusing as her previous talk to our U3A meeting.

Lesley Thompson



The internet provides a brilliant way to keep in touch with distant family and friends



post, it would have been too late to do anything.

I can Skype my grandchildren - they love it - and my cousin in New Zealand. I can see what my adult godsons are up to via Facebook. It keeps the relationship alive. I know that Gavin climbed Machu Picchu for a breast cancer charity and I sponsored him. I'd never have known otherwise - you know what young men are like for keeping in touch with us oldies.

We third-agers need to embrace technology to some extent. It is the way of the world today.

Statin!), not quite sure of their purpose, but I do have a computer (a laptop performs the same function). If I want a new washing machine I can search various suppliers, compare prices and features, check on Which? to see what they think, find who delivers for free, and place my order online. No standing in queues to pay.

And for those of you worried about the security of internet purchases, yes, I was once subject to a fraud on my credit card but it wasn't via the internet, it was in a shop I had visited to buy something. And I knew it had happened straight away because I had internet access to my credit card bill and saw these peculiar transactions. Had I waited till the statement arrived through the

It will become more so in the next five years (look how fast it has moved already) and if you intend living for more than ten years, you will miss out on so much if you don't at least try to get to grips with technology.

So give it a whirl, get the smartphone, get an email address, learn how to use it. Download your photos to your computer, crop them, rearrange them (no, I'm no good at that either, but I aim to be), send them as attachments to people.

It's all about communicating with others. Get used to it, or you will miss out on so much over the next 10 years - if you are not already.

Margaret Weaver

WEBSITE: www.newmillsu3a.org.uk

Questions and answers

SCIENCE AND SOCIETY

SHOULD we allow fracking? What are the 'green' alternatives for energy generation?

Are drones intrusive? Are driverless cars safe? We marvel at the latest space explorations. These are just a few of the topics we've investigated in the last couple of years.

There is more information about our Group's future programme and our discussions on our New Mills and District U3A Web Page and on our Blog (linked from the web page).

If you are interested in scientific and technological developments and how they affect our lives, why not join our Science and Society Group? We meet on the fourth Wednesday afternoon of the month (at New Mills Adult Education Centre) to discuss issues and concerns, each meeting's discussion usually being led by a member of the group. No particular knowledge of science is required.

Our provisional programme for future months is:

September 28: The Geological Column

This will describe how the divisions of earth history came to be drawn up by



The fracking debate ... hot topic

geologists over the last two hundred years.

October 26: Sports Engineering

There is no meeting this month (August).

Occasional visitors are welcome, but please let me know if you wish to attend (science@newmillsu3a.org.uk). Suggestions for topics, and offers for talks, are also welcome.

Ann Apps

MANY thanks to those of you who have pitched in to this edition of your U3A Newsletter.

Email articles and pictures for inclusion in the next edition (December, 2016) to: newsletter@newmillsu3a.org.uk
The AGM will be held in November and there will be a report in the Winter newsletter.

Please understand that contributions may be edited.

Mike Perry