

newsletter

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So much to enjoy!

Summer 2022

Issue 2

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Chair's Welcome

It is hard to believe that six months have passed since my election. How quickly the time has gone! I am enjoying being in the Chair and must thank each Committee member, and the five non-Committee role holders, for their commitment and support. They really are a dedicated team.



Carol Wright our new Speaker Organiser is settling in very well, busily booking presenters for next year's monthly programme. We have a consistently good attendance at **Speaker Meetings**, and I hope if you have not done so previously, you can be encouraged to join us.

Speaker Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month at the New Mills Town Hall starting at 10:30am. The talks by invited speakers are always interesting, and there is the opportunity for questions.

The meetings offer a regular forum for the group and are an ideal time to catch up with other members. Before the start of the presentations there are usually some general u3a notices. Both existing and prospective members are welcome with refreshments available (bring along your own cup if you prefer).

I would like to remind you too about the **Coffee Mornings** which we hold from 10.30am-12.00 noon on the last Tuesday of the month at the Church on Mellor Road.

Plentiful tea, coffee and biscuits and for those tempted there are usually Mahjong and Scrabble tables on the go.

The Summer Newsletter celebrates the variety of the activity groups, and the Editor would like to thank those of you who have provided details of your respective group. Undoubtedly, it is because of the input of all the coordinators that we can offer such an eclectic programme.

For individual contacts please refer to the **Activity Groups List** (recently revised by Coordinator Jean Windsor).

And should you wish to start up a new activity do not hesitate to get in touch with Jean. She will be delighted to hear from you!

I hope you have a relaxed but fully engaged summer!

Sue Rivers
Chair

New Mills & District u3a

Members Open Forum



Thank you Philip Kendall for sharing with us this reflective poem inspired by 'Fern Hill'. And a reminder that if you have a creative piece, or indeed anything you think will be of interest to and enjoyed by other members, which you are happy to be included in the Winter Newsletter, please just make sure it gets to the Editor.

TIME WAS (Apology to Dylan Thomas)

"Now as I was young...."
I would cheerfully
Lace up my boots and trample
Full of energy on Kinder's slopes,
Scrambling on gritstone track
Or standing solemn
At the crumbled edge of
Some deep, peat, grough,
To view the incongruous metal litter
Of a B24 Liberator, fatally mis-led
By altimeter or pilot error to
Make moorland graves
For its young fliers.
Now, at the slightest incline
I must stop for breath -
Pause - whilst the battery-box,
(So neatly implanted
Beneath my shoulder),
Regulates my ailing heartbeat
And restores my willpower.

Knees, that once
Were sturdy 'neath the bulk
Of weighty scrummaging,
Have ceased to carry even
My excessive mass, now
Without complaint!

Anno Domini – The Good Lord's years.
The March of Time.

Oh Death, where is thy sting?
Age brings mixed blessings:
Years of memory,
Fulfilment,
Achievement,
Tinged with sadnesses
And disappointments.
To do it once again-
Now there's a thought!
Would it be the same?
Not on your Nelly!

© **Philip Kendall** (November 2020)



*u3a poet seeking inspiration
in Lyme Orangery*

External Events

Open Exhibition
25th June ~ 2nd September

This Open Exhibition attracts both professional and amateur artists and is the highlight of the Buxton Museum's summer programme. Tuesday to Saturday 10am-5pm (last admission 4pm) and visitors are given the opportunity to vote for the exhibit which they consider is best in show.

Walking Baton Relay . . .

Derbyshire Network is inviting groups in the area to join this event devised to celebrate the u3a 40th Anniversary. The idea is to walk to our nearest u3a group location and pass on the baton. A map of the whole route has been drawn up, starting in Derby on 7th September and finishing there on 23rd September. Clearly, it is hoped walking groups can be encouraged to participate in the challenge, but all members invited.

Full details available from Jean Windsor
groupscoordinator@newmillsu3a.org.uk

Activity Groups

Everyone needs to take some time out. Perhaps relaxing in a sunny garden or sitting on a park bench watching the world go by. But as you will know research shows good health and social interaction are also requisites for optimal wellbeing. Fortunate then that this u3a has a variety of indoor and outdoor pursuits to help you achieve that.



The Playreading Group Presents

Members of the **Playreading Group** are busy murdering each other again!

We recommenced after the lifting of Lockdown restrictions and we quickly settled into our customary mixture of whodunnits and bedroom farces!

We do occasionally try ourselves on something a bit more demanding – *“but it’s so difficult to get good scripts these days, darling.”*

Post Covid, we topped up our membership but we are limited by the number of seats in our sitting rooms! However, we never seem to be all together in one place at one time – so there may be room to squeeze in another regular attender.

We have stayed with the routine of hosting our fortnightly meetings in turn. We enjoy visiting each other’s homes and we have some skilled bakers in our number!

We obtain our play sets from Stockport Library and take it in turns to be responsible for choosing our next reading assignments.

We have recently discovered a way of selecting from Stockport’s selection of play sets on-line and picking up at Marple Library. So much more convenient.

Truth to tell, we have missed sharing a little bit of our enjoyment with everyone else at the September Town Hall u3a Open Event. *“It’s so exciting darling: the smell of the crowd and the roar of the greasepaint . . . ”.*

We’re not a bit like that actually! Just a pleasant Wednesday morning’s get together for a friendly group. If that sounds like your thing, we might squash up on the sofa for you! Just contact me as Group Co-ordinator.

Phil Kendall



Mahjong Group

Up & Running



The **Mahjong Group** is up and running again but at a different time.

We now meet 10.30am to 12 noon in New Mills on the second Monday of each month.

There is also an invitation to join a game at the monthly Coffee Mornings.

New members are very welcome, and we are happy to help anyone who has not played before.

To find out more please contact me.

Hazel Perry



Pétanque Group



The Rake's Progress

Following two years during which we refrained from handling each other's boules for fear of contracting a disease, the Pétanque section has started up again.

However, since our previous meeting the playing area (aka piste) had deteriorated markedly. We have set about filling in several craters on the surface with gritsand and then stamping on and raking the gritsand in a not too successful attempt to get our balls going in a reasonably straight line.

Nevertheless, we have adopted the Olympic adage that competing is more important than winning. This is particularly the case for the male members of the group who have yet to score a victory over the females.

Plus ça change

Bob Wass



Explore the Countryside with the Birds and Botany Group



Are there tadpoles . . . ?



Common Lizard



Black Tailed Godwit



Green Veined White

Wood Sorrell



Lunch!

Birds & Botany members are a friendly bunch of (very) amateur naturalists who enjoy exploring the countryside and all its flora, fauna and fungus, not just birds and wildflowers. None of us are experts and we all learn from each other. There is often much scratching of heads and consultation of field guides when it comes to the wildflowers!

Birds & Botany meets throughout the year, more or less every three weeks. We meet on different days of the week to avoid constant clashes as members also attend lots of other other U3A groups. We operate a mailing list to inform members of visits in addition to the information on our u3a webpage. We also have a closed Facebook page where members can post photos of visits and of sightings or other information between meetings.

March to October are full day events requiring a packed lunch. They involve walking no more than 3 to 5 miles around areas both local and further afield. Favourite sites include Martin Mere WWT early in the year for the overwintering wildfowl, Stanage Edge and Padley Gorge, Hartington Meadows, Lathkill Dale, RSPB Old Moor, Chorlton Water Park, the Upper Goyt Valley, Carsington Water and Raptor Watch at Parkgate on the Wirral. We try to rotate site visits from year to year.

From November to March visits are slightly less frequent, morning only and tend to be shorter and more local. Examples include the River Goyt and the canal around New Mills, Chadkirk Grange and Etherow Country Park.

Currently we have around a dozen members but not everyone comes on every visit depending on their diaries and inclinations. The meetings are also weather dependent. We are fair weather naturalists, not hard core!

Weather appropriate clothing and decent walking shoes or boots are required as some paths do get muddy. Binoculars, either 8x or 10x magnification are useful and don't need to be top end. If you have wildflower or bird guides (books or apps), they'll prove helpful but, if not, other group members are always happy to share.

For full day trips, we usually meet at the Co-op car park, Church Road, New Mills at 10 am to share transport. For morning visits we tend to meet at the site.

If we've sparked your interest, get in touch for a chat.

David Pierce & Fred Pickering

Travels with the Outings Group

January saw Outings getting off to a flying start with a meat and potato pie lunch followed by a choice of sweets. It was good to see everyone enjoying good food and good company.

Our **February** outing found a coach full of members eager to find the bargains at Boundary Mill in Colne. There were many bags to be loaded into the luggage hold at the end of the day.

The short break to take part in the Pudding Club also took place in **February**, staying in the attractive Cotswold village of Mickleton. The evening of the main event started with a light dinner before the seven puddings were paraded before us. A number of the party managed all seven I gave up after three.

Buxton was the destination for our **March** outing with a tour of the Buxton Crescent Experience situated in the newly restored Crescent building. This was an excellent tour very much enjoyed by all.

One of the highlights was the hot air balloon journey over Georgian Buxton. My group enjoyed dressing up in various headgear worn by past visitors to the town such as a Roman soldier and Mary Queen of Scots.

We planned our **April** outing to coincide with bluebell time at Calke Abbey. It was a warm sunny day and a number of us did make it to the bluebell woods which were lovely. The House in its spectacular setting was the main attraction. The walled garden was also a popular place to visit with lots of colour in the borders and fifty beautiful Auriculas displayed in the theatre.

For **May** we travelled to Cannon Hall near Barnsley. Set in 700 acres of parkland for 200 years the hall was home to the Spencer-Stanhope family who made their fortune in the local iron industry. Taken over by Barnsley Council the hall is now a Country House Museum exhibiting a extensive collection of furniture, paintings, ceramics and glassware. The museum is also home to the De Morgan collection, Tiles and ceramics by William De Morgan and stunning paintings by his wife Evelyn who had family connections with the Spencer-Stanhope family.

We look forward to our summer programme which includes York and Brodsworth Hall and Gardens. Also, our holiday to Somerset taking place on **11th July**.



Dates for your Diary

June

9th Visit to York

Join us to enjoy exploring this gloriously historic city. Depart 9:00am and cost £16 for the coach.

21st Speakers Meeting

A dramatic account by **Martin Lloyd** of how a group of assassins brought about change in the passport regulations; how the unmasking of a spy caused a modification in passport design; and how for one man the passport itself turned into a killer. **Passports, Assassins, Traitors & Spies** is sure to be an enlightening presentation.

July

6th Visit to Brodsworth Hall & Gardens

The Hall was built in the 1860's and the 'grand rooms' on the ground floor recall its Victorian heyday. The gardens have been restored to their full Victorian splendour. Take in the terrace and tearoom where a fine selection of Yorkshire food is served. Departing at 9:00am the cost is £23 or for English Heritage members £13 (entrance to the Hall and gardens free for the latter).

11th Somerset Holiday

Five nights and six days staying at the 4-star hotel **Mercure Bridgwater** in Somerset.

15th Jim Jam/Last Tango in New Mills

A double comedy bill by the Martyr Players at the St George's Parish Hall, New Mills. Tickets £10 and seating is numbered. Members can book through Outings, a list will be available at the next meeting, and you are advised to book early for a good seat.

19th Speakers Meeting

Acoustic musicians **Steve and Carol Robson** with the intriguing title of **Fools' Gold**. They gave an entertaining presentation via Zoom but are now back with a live event. The duo accompanies their music with stories and a history of their songs. They are very engaging, involving the audience from the start.

August

16th Speakers Meeting

Nick Bostin is a local man from Chapel-en-le-Frith and will talk about his **Role as an Immigration Officer** including his postings in Bangladesh and Libya. During his work he encountered a number of celebrities including Ingrid Bergman, Burt Lancaster and Groucho Marx. His added claim to fame is that he was a finalist in the Pointless television quiz.

September

7th Outing

To be confirmed. We are hoping to offer a trip to Southport with the chance to take in the sea air but please watch this space.

20th Groups Display

Further details to follow

October

18th Speakers Meeting

An affectionate look at some of Mike Storr's favourite music hall laughter makers. Mike is a Freeman of the City of Lincoln and worked in far flung places for ICI. He is a past President of Carlton Rotary Club and was a regional finalist in ITV's 'Pride of Britain Awards 2019' in the Fundraiser of the Year category.

Coming Up

Make sure to pencil 15th November the date of the 2022 AGM and 20th December in also when we will hold our festive Christmas Party.

Full information of all our activities can be found on the website and on the Information Board at meetings. And if in doubt contact or catch a Committee member – if they do not have the answer they are sure to know who has.