

A painting of a winter landscape. The scene is dominated by snow-covered trees and a stream. The colors are muted, with shades of blue, purple, and brown, suggesting a cold, overcast day. The brushwork is visible, giving the painting a textured, expressive feel. The text is overlaid on the top portion of the painting.

NEW MILLS & DISTRICT u3a

NEWSLETTER

CELEBRATING 20 YEARS

2025 DIARY DATES

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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Committee comes together on the first Tuesday of the month and during the past year we welcomed two new coopted members. Denise Hall (in the role of Speaker Organiser) and Roger May (role to be confirmed). Happily we think they both enjoyed the experience because they were persuaded to submit nominations to become elected representatives. This means, following endorsement at the AGM, we are now a band of ten with Roger and Denise joining Sue Rivers (Chair), Ann Apps (Deputy Chair), Pat Stanway (Business Secretary) and Margaret Weaver (re-elected as Treasurer). Together with Catherine Ager (Newsletter Editor), Wendy Cheshire (re-elected as Membership Secretary), Jean Windsor (re-elected Groups Coordinator) and Carol Wright (Committee Member).

Please contact any one of us if you have a query or wish to raise something with the Committee. And if you are unsure just who is who check the gallery to put a name to the friendly face.



Catherine Ager



Wendy Cheshire



Roger May



Jean Windsor



Sue Rivers



Ann Apps



Pat Stanway



Margaret Weaver



Denise Hall



Carol Wright

Others not to forget are Hazel Perry (Almoner), Barbara Matthews and Pat Cooper (Outings), Eileen Gilligan and Hilary Harmer (Website Editors) and Lesley Mason (Refreshments).

All equally invaluable to the group as are many of our members always ready and willing to help when the call goes out for extra hands!



Hello and welcome to the latest edition of our Newsletter.

As I am sure most of you are aware, 2024 marked the 20th anniversary of New Mills and District u3a. We celebrated this at the Group Displays in September which was a great success with about fifteen groups contributing. So thank you everyone.

I must mention the celebration cake made by member Eva, the banner crafted by Wendy and the commemorative bookmark designed by members of the Photo 1 group. Also, the various contributions to our buffet, the efforts that went into decorating the room with the bunting, etc and the tea ladies who worked exceptionally hard to keep us well supplied.



There are some great photos on our website thanks to Pat Stanway and Jean Windsor, so please do take a look.

We welcomed many new members this year and I hope to meet some of you at one of the various Activity Groups, Speaker Meetings on the third Tuesday of the month or our very social Coffee Mornings held on the last Tuesday. Full details are posted on our website and available on the Information Table at general meetings.

The Committee decided to postpone the AGM from November to the same morning as the Christmas Party because of the bad weather. It was good to see those of you who made it but for those unable to attend just a summary of items from my report to the AGM.

Membership numbers are still rising, currently in

the low 500's, and I encourage anyone who would like to start, join or help an Activity Group to please get in touch with our Groups Coordinator.

The monthly Speaker Meetings are all well attended and we had many varied speakers last year. Our new Speaker Organiser, Denise Hall, has been very busy with this year's diary already full with subject ranging from pork pies to chickens! My thanks to both Denise and to Carol Wright, our previous Speaker Organiser, for all the assistance she continued to give.. And as always I would like to thank Catherine for producing this newsletter.

This will be my last year as Chair, I have already done three ~ doesn't time fly. I have enjoyed it all and am very well supported by all the committee members. Keep safe have fun laugh a lot!

Sue Rivers (Chair)

ACTIVITY GROUPS

Finding out More . . .

To find out more about joining an Activity Group, please approach the appropriate Group Leader. Contact details are given on the Activity Groups List, on the website or check with the Groups Coordinator, Jean Windsor.

If the group you want to join is currently full it is possible the Group Leader will agree to keep your name on a waiting list. And if you wish to suggest a subject for a potential new group Jean is waiting to hear from you!

And a regular presence at the monthly Speaker Meetings is the Information Desk. Organised and usually manned by Membership Secretary, Wendy Cheshire, this is another go to place for answers to any queries you may have about an Activity Group. Or how to contact a Group Leader.



2024 Group Displays
Wendy Cheshire on the Information Table



2024 Group Displays
Sue Rivers with Barbara Matthews & Hazel Perry

Wonderful to see so many Activity Groups participating in this year's Group Display and celebration of our twentieth anniversary. These included:



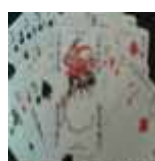
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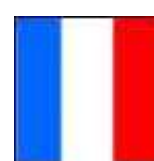
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country
dancing



French
conversation



gardening



genealogy



knit and
natter



needlecraft



Outings



photography
1



photography
2



medium
walks



Monthly
Ramblers



Thursday
weekly
longer walks

The Group Displays event is held annually in September at the Town Hall and this year's certainly attracted a great deal of interest both from our own members and the visiting public. It also resulted in ten new subscriptions. There will of course be an opportunity to participate in 2025 ~ so something to think about. The next few pages provide details of some of the Activity Groups together with reports from Group Leaders and images of the colourful stands at the Group Displays.

Art Appreciation

Meets: 2nd Monday of the month

Time: 10am ~ 12 noon

Venue: Spring Bank Arts Centre

Group Leader: Ann Jackson

Contact: t.jackson2@btinternet.com

The format for most meetings is a screen presentation together with group discussion. We also enjoy regular visits to Art venues throughout the year—for example a recent one to the Whitworth Art Gallery in Manchester to see the Barbara Matthews exhibition which tied in to the topic considered in October.



Current Affairs

Meets: 1st Wednesday of the month

Time: 10am ~ 12 noon

Venue: Spring Bank Arts Centre

Group Leader: Ann Clark

Contact: groupscoordinator@newmillsu3a.org.uk

It is with some trepidation that I talk about the group and its news. I enjoyed the group so much that when Rick had to stand down, I offered to take over.

We did have a few good meetings and then the general election was announced and our meeting was one day before it. Most of the group were involved with the election so we cancelled that meeting and we normally have a break in August to allow for holidays.

Now we need to kick start the meetings and look forward to new members joining us. We

Art

Meets: Last Monday of the month

Time: 2pm ~ 4pm

Venue: St Georges Church Hall

Group Leader: Liz Wilson

Contact: groupscoordinator@newmillsu3a.org.uk

We are friendly self help group are currently welcoming new members. Park in the small car park, on the road, or on the lane opposite by the football club.



welcome all points of view and the more there are the more diverse the discussion. Every one is respectful and interested in improving their knowledge of topics that come up.

Mostly we try to understand the items of the present which is often complicated but usually there is someone to elucidate us.

So come and join us. We meet on the first Wednesday of the month at Spring Bank Arts from 10am to 12 noon.

Looking forward to seeing you there.



International Folk Dance

Meets: 1st & 3rd Tuesday of the month

Time: 2:15pm

Venue: Uniting Church, Whaley Bridge

Group Leaders: Sally Auld & Ruth Gay

Contact: groupscoordinator@newmillsu3a.org.uk

Please note we shall be meeting in the upper hall of Uniting Church in Whaley Bridge from the beginning of 2025 for a few months. This is because of scheduled works being carried out at the Mechanics Institute, our usual venue.

Sally Auld & Ruth Gay



Crosswords

Meets: 3rd Monday of the month

Time: 2:15pm

Venue: Member's Home

Group Leaders: Kath Garside & Liz Wilson

The Crossword Groups have regrouped and joined the two groups. We meet in someone's house and as there are now eight of us we feel our group is full for the moment.

Kath Garside & Liz Wilson



Singing for Fun

Meets: 1st Monday of the month

Time: 1:15pm-3:15pm

Venue: Providence Church

Tutor: Rose Hodgson

Contact: groupscoordinator@newmillsu3a.org.uk

No sheet music, auditions or concerts ~ this really is just for singing for fun. All you need is your natural voice and an enjoyment of singing and laughter. And of course we always have a tea break in the middle of the session!

Tutor, Rose Hodgson, is experienced, enthusiastic and extremely encouraging. She is a trained Natural Voice practitioner and teaches each part at a pace to suit us and in a very informal way. You'll be amazed at what we achieve at the end of each session.

For new members and existing members who haven't already considered Singing for Fun as an activity, we invite you to come and give us a try. Just come and enjoy a free taster on your first visit.

To celebrate the 20th anniversary, we made a recording of a couple of songs ~ to issue to members of the group ~ as a memory of happy times singing together in unaccompanied harmony, with our brilliant leader Rose.

Liz & Dave Wilson



Le Club Francais

Meets: 1st & 3rd Thursday of the month

Venue: Library Lecture Theatre

Group Leaders: Dave & Liz Wilson

Contact: groupscoordinator@newmillsu3a.org.uk

Please note our change of venue.

We celebrated the 20th anniversary with an 'end of term' social film event in the Library Lecture Room.

Group members brought a delicious selection of quiches, salads, cheeses, sausages, baguettes and desserts for lunch which we served in the interval together with drinks and time for a chat.

The film was 'Untouchables' a quirky life affirming film (in French!) based on a real life story. We were particularly happy to see Bob (our ever patient teacher) and Christine again. A lovely occasion!

Dave & Liz Wilson



Sunday Lunch Club

Meets: Usually Sundays each month

Venue: Variety

Group Leader: Carol Barnett

Contact: groupscoordinator@newmillsu3a.org.uk

Please note the Group is taking a temporary break ~ see note (*right*) from Carol.

Knit & Natter

Meets: Last Wednesday of the month

Venue: Check with Groups Coordinator

Group Leader: Sue Colston

Contact: groupscoordinator@newmillsu3a.org.uk



2024 Group Displays
Knit and Natter Stand

Needlecraft

Meets: 4th Tuesday of the month

Venue: Check with Groups Coordinator

Group Leader: Ann Kemp

Contact: groupscoordinator@newmillsu3a.org.uk



2024 Group Displays
Needlecraft Stand



An apology to all my Sunday Lunch Club friends. So sorry had to cancel the September lunch date.

I am feeling tons better now but absolutely no energy to organise another lunch date. I will text everyone once I feel up to it. Thanks to all for their good wishes on my recovery.

Carol B xx

Photography I

Meets: 2nd Friday of the month

Time: 10am ~ 12 noon

Venue: Spring Bank Arts Centre

Group Leader: Cliff Kemp

The aims of the group are simple – Learn – Share - Gain Confidence – Satisfy – Amuse - Enjoy. Members learn through doing and an informal exchange of knowledge and experience. Level of expertise and sophistication of equipment are far less important than an open mind and a good eye for a picture.

To mark the occasion of the 20th anniversary we had printed a bookmark available to everyone in New Mills and District u3a. Designed by Pat Stanway using local area photographs taken by members Chris Bond, Roger May and Brian Turnball.

Cliff Kemp



Photography II

Meets: Last Friday of the month

Time: 10:30am

Venue: Check with Group Leaders

Group Leaders: David Pierce & Fred Pickering

Contact: photography@newmillsu3a.org.uk



Genealogy

Meets: 2nd Thursday of the month

Time: 2pm ~ 4pm

Venue: New Mills Volunteer Centre

Group Leader: Pat Stanway

Contact: genealogy@newmillsu3a.org.uk

Have you ever looked at old photographs in the family album and wondered what we could learn from the past generations picture there?

What could they tell us about their lives, their work, their living conditions, their local communities and their family connections? With the help of old style research combined with cutting AI (Artificial Intelligence), the Genealogy Group created a film show for the u3a twentieth anniversary display, where our ancestors' photographs became moving and speaking individuals, giving us the answers to all these questions.

Genealogy, or family history as many prefer to call it, has changed beyond all recognition as a result of new technology, and we have had to learn a whole new way of working in order to keep up. The group is now full but anyone considering joining should contact the Group Leader to go on a waiting list. In the meantime websites we would recommend to start your own search are www.freebmd.org.uk and www.familysearch.org

It was whilst looking at some other websites that we discovered Deep Story software on www.myheritage.com This offered us the opportunity to bring Victorian photographs to life and have them tell their own stories. No fee is involved as the software can be used by anyone registering on the site without paying a subscription. Each finished film comes out at about three to five minutes long and is quite a novel way of presenting our family history stories.

We hope those of you who saw a part of the film at the Group Displays enjoyed it and will be inspired by the Deep Story software, the old photographs in your album, and the family stories passed down the generations and will have a go at producing Talking Ancestors of your own!

Gardening

Meets: 3rd Monday of the month

Time: 2pm ~ 4pm

Venue: New Mills Library Lecture Room

Group Leader: Catherine Ager

Contact: gardening@newmillsu3a.org.uk

It was early last year when (forgive the pun) the seed was sown with the idea that a perfect way for the Gardening Group to celebrate the twentieth anniversary would be to plant a tree. And it was member Jane Doyle who suggested the New Mills Community Orchard might have an available plot. So with the help of Jill Hulme from Nature New Mills contact was made and permission granted.

Having selected a Victoria Plum from David Ross nursery we arranged for it to be planted on the morning of the Orchard Wassailing. Keeping with tradition children hung slices of toast from many of the tree branches, cider was poured at the roots and we made lots of noise banging pots and pans together. A real blessing for the forthcoming season!



2024 Group | Displays
Gardening Stand



2024 Group | Displays
Genealogy Stand

The Twenty Year Hike

There have been walking groups for all abilities within New Mills and District u3a community since its inauguration in 2004.

It seemed fitting, therefore, that they might pool their collective experience in the devising of a suitable event with which to celebrate our anniversary.

And so it came about, that representatives of each walking group combined their efforts to Battle the Bounds of New Mills ~ that is to say, walk the entire 18 miles around the Parish boundary ~ and enjoy some of the magnificent scenery which unfolded along the way.

This was achieved over two days by a total of eighteen participants ~ several of whom were able to complete the entire circuit ~ with others doing sections which their available time and/or abilities allowed. A rewarding experience for one and all. A few landmark images from the two days can be overleaf.

Roger May (Shorter Walks Group Leader)

Shorter Walks the Pub Lunch

Meets: 2nd Tuesday & 4th Friday of the month

Time: 10:30am

Venue: Variable

Group Leader: Roger May

Contact: shorterwalks@newmillsu3a.org.uk



Thursday Weekly, Longer Walks

Meets: Most Thursdays of the month

Time: Variable

Venue: Variable

Group Leader: Charles Huff

Contact: groupscoordinator@newmillsu3a.org.uk



Monthly Ramblers

Meets: 1st Thursday of the month

Time: Variable

Venue: Variable

Group Leader: Jan Smith

Contact: monthlyramblers@newmillsu3a.org.uk



Medium Walks

Meets: Usually third Thursday of the month

Time: 10:30am

Venue: Variable

Group Leader: David Pierce

Contact: groupscoordinator@newmillsu3a.org.uk



Strolling

Meets: 4th Monday of the month

Time: 10:30am

Venue: Variable

Group Leader: Kath Garside

Contact: strollers@newmillsu3a.org.uk



Cycling

Meets: Third Wednesday of the month

Time: 10:30am

Venue: Variable and weather permitting

Group Leader: Ann Apps

Contact: cycling@newmillsu3a.org.uk

We meet once per month for leisurely rides of generally 25–30 miles in four to six hours including stops. The outings continue throughout the year (weather permitting), mainly on minor roads in Derbyshire, Yorkshire and Cheshire.

A full list of dates for outings is on the website and contact Ann Apps if you are interested in joining the group.

No one in the Cycling Group can quite remember when we started (maybe 17 years ago) but we didn't let that get in the way of celebrating the twentieth anniversary. Times have changed a bit and most of us now have some form of power assistance on our bikes. This was need on the Anniversary Ride which was 40 kilometres long with 1000 metres of ascent. Fifteen of us circumnavigated Three Shires Head thus riding in Derbyshire, Cheshire and Staffordshire. We started from Derbyshire

Bridge in Goyt Valley and cycled up to the Cat and Fiddle and down Wildboardclough to Algreave. Cakes and coffee were consumed at the Riverside Café at Gradbach Mill before setting off up and over the Leek Road and down to Longnor for lunch at the New Moorland Café.

Then it was up and down to Glutton Bridge Before the long ascent up to Axe Edge and back down to the cars. There we celebrated with lemon cake and glasses of Nozeco and/or Prosecco and raised our glasses to absent friends and to David Cooper, who had been a valued member of the group.

Liz & Dave Wilson



Outings

Meets: Members are requested to join outings at New Mills bus station unless the journey passes through your area and pick ups have been arranged in advance with Group Leaders

Time: Various

Venue: Various Monthly

Group Leader: Pat Cooper & Barbara Matthews

Contact: outings@newmillsu3a.org.uk

All outings are open to the full membership and full details are usually displayed on the noticeboard at the back of the Hall. Places are limited therefore we recommend checking at the beginning of each meeting. Coming up:

Sunday 6 July ~ 3 hour cruise Liverpool Bay

Cost: £45 (return coach travel and cruise)

Deposit: £10 due in the new year

Travel to The Albert Dock, Liverpool with free time in the morning and for lunch.

We then join the cruise where passengers will enjoy the scenery and learn about the history and geography of the River Mersey and Liverpool Bay with expert commentary from a Blue Badge Guide.

Where the Mersey meets the Irish sea we turn and make our return journey.

On this special sightseeing cruise we experience Anthony Gormley's spectacular Another Place art installation on Crosby beach. 100 cast-iron life-sized figures spread across the foreshore.

The cruise features live music from local artists including Liverpool Shanty Kings. Snacks and drinks available at the licensed bar.

Please note on this occasion members may bring their spouse or a friend who is a non member.

Pat Cooper & Barbara Matthews

MARKING THE OCCASION



2025 Dates *for your* Diary

SPEAKER & GENERAL MEETINGS are held in the Main Hall of New Mills Town Hall accessed from the Aldersgate side entrance. Open to all current and prospective members starting at 10:30am with refreshments.

21 January

Colin Hughes
History and Benefits
of Tai Chi



18 February

Clare O'Donnell
How Melton Mowbray Became Famous



18 March

David Tolliday
Wildlife of Shetland



15 April

Craig Wright
Strines, Home of the Railway Children

20 May

Andrew Wetters
What came first the Chicken or the Egg?



17 June

Trevor Wragg
Stone Walling

15 July

Ian Morgan
Bolsover Castle

19 August

Angela Stafford
Herbs and Potions:
A Short History of Medicinal Plants



16 September

Annual Group Displays

21 October

Roger Browne
Musical Memory of the
Golden Age of Radio



18 November

Annual General Meeting

16 December

Christmas Social / Quiz

COFFEE MORNINGS Why not join us from 10.30 am-12.00 noon at the Providence United Reformed Church, Mellor Road, New Mills. We come together on the last Tuesday in the month and everyone is welcome, including new and prospective members. £1 per person for limitless tea and/or coffee and biscuits.

2025 DATES:

28 January; 25 February; 25 March; 29 April;
27 May; 24 June; 29 July; 26 August;
30 September; 28 October; 25 November

NB: NO COFFEE MORNING IN DECEMBER



CELEBRATING 20 YEARS
LEARNING, LAUGHING, LIVING