

Dear All, Last month at the Members' Meeting we thanked Lynn for all the work she has done on our behalf over the years since Lymm and Thelwall u3a started. She has decided to step down from her role on Committee due to personal reasons. Lynn was on the Steering Committee as Secretary back in 2017 when our u3a was being set up and she has given her time tirelessly over the years, welcoming new members, leading us through numerous Socials, Outings and even Walking Holidays to Spain. She has been Chair, Social Secretary, Coordinator of the 4-6ers Walking Group, the Theatre and Concert Groups and she kept our spirits up during Covid with her online quizzes. I would personally like to send Lynn my thanks as having persuaded me to join the Committee not long after I moved here I have gone on to get to know so many of you lovely members!! Lynn will still be around helping with the Theatre and Concert Groups and she tells me she has some ideas for new groups! Watch this space!

Sue M



Members' Meetings - Christine

Our Members' Meetings are normally held in Thelwall Parish Hall on the **third Thursday** of the month.

Visitors are welcome to attend two meetings before joining. The next meeting will be on Thursday 20th November at 10.00 a.m. for a 10.30 a.m. start. Do come along early for a drink and a chat.

Refreshments will be served from 10.00 a.m. until 10.15 a.m.

Thursday 20th November John Miller Life at the Beeb

John spent nearly 30 years as a member of the BBC staff. He describes how he began his career in sound radio operations, concentrating on his years of producing TV programmes as a BBC network TV producer, based in Manchester.

December No Meeting

Thursday 15th January Brian Topping Tales of a Customs Officer

Ever wondered what Customs Officers are looking for?? Brian will tell of his many years during the 1970s and 80s as a serving Customs Officer in the former department of HM Customs and Excise, at Heathrow Airport. He will provide an interesting, informative and entertaining journey through the many situations he came across when dealing with passengers travelling through the airport and his involvement in apprehending and investigating smugglers.

Membership - Allen

There were 105 Members at our last meeting. Our Membership now stands at 368.

Dates for your Diary

Here are some dates for your Diary. Please note them down.

Thursday 20 th November	Members' Meeting	Thelwall Parish Hall
Thursday 27 th November	Wreath making	Smith's Nursery
Saturday 6 th /Sunday 7 th Dec	Christmas Tree Festival	St Mary's Church, Lymm
Monday 15 th December	Christmas Lunch	Lymm Golf Club



Social

If you have any new ideas for events or would like to organise an outing please contact the [Social Team](#). We welcome suggestions or we are willing to help if there is something you would like to plan or, alternatively, come and join our team

Buckleys Restaurant



- Forty members ate their lunch at Warrington and Vale Royal College's training restaurant Buckley's. On arrival we were greeted by the front of house students and were delighted how the room looked with three long tables beautifully set ready for us. Paul, the Staff member in charge, explained that the students had been preparing for us since 6 a.m. and that most of them were at the beginning of their Level 1 course. Following home-made warm bread we had a three-course lunch followed by coffee or tea. all for the bargain price of £15 a head. We asked for all the students to come out of the kitchen at the end so we could thank them personally. There were at least 13 chefs and about 10 front of house.



Christmas Wreath Making

Thursday 27th November 2.00 p.m. £35 per person

There are three places left on our Wreath Making Course at Smiths' Nursery.

Full instructions and all materials will be provided. Refreshments (Glühwein or orange juice) are included and the workshop is cosy and warm. If you would like to join us email [Christine](#) to secure your place asap. She will then let you know payment details.

We had so much fun last year! Sue

Valentine's Social Lymm Village Hall Tuesday 10th February 1.00 p.m.

Join us for some Valentine's fun at Lymm Village Cost £15

The afternoon will include a buffet lunch entertainment by Paul Thompson, a quiz and a Valentine's Raffle!

To secure a place please express your interest to [Sue](#) asap as this event will be popular.



October's Speaker by Sue Clarke

Our speaker this month was Caroline England. Law was in her DNA but storytelling in her heart from an early age. Early teenage fantasies of Donny Osmond were distinctly Mills and Boon. However, later working experiences and observations fuelled her career progression from divorce and professional indemnity lawyer to writing as the Duchess of dark domestic noir.

After graduating in law Caroline followed a path of least resistance with a legal career based in Manchester. Early days in criminal law showed that most clients were people who just make bad choices. However, their initial mood



lightened when they found themselves represented by Ms England. As a divorce lawyer she met people at their lowest ebb. We learnt that even happy marriages have their tipping points, the combination of seduction and devoted sports viewing resulting in no winners. Family life inevitably crept up with the birth of her three daughters, her work pattern adapted with reducing days, job sharing then finally writing full time. The new challenges, joys and tragedies closer to home added more inspiration for her writing. Poignantly her first baby's birth coincided with her mother's death.

Despite the ups and downs of publishing, which Caroline described with humour, we were impressed by her prolific output since 2017, as her fourteenth book 'Behind Her Smile' will be out in November. Her 2nd book 'My Husband's Lies' was a top ten ebook best seller and distributed in supermarkets and book shops like Waterstones. Caroline was surprised to be classified as a crime writer and shortlisted for a Crime Writers Association Award. She stressed her approach was psychological, using dark suspense and creating ordinary relatable characters getting caught up in extraordinary situations, pressures and dilemmas leading on to crime. The talk was illustrated by each of her books as she outlined their backgrounds, all largely based around south Manchester and surrounding areas. It's a small world and you might recognise places and people you know. Pauline gave the vote of thanks. The Q&A session revealed Caroline's working patterns. She disciplines herself, treating it as a day job, taking approximately 4 months for the 1st draft with completion to publishing about a year. She is a Pantser rather than a Plotter, using ideas, names and characters as they come to mind. Tips for writer's block - walk, drive, have a bath. Our u3a caters for the first two activities but no bathing group, any volunteers? Caroline stayed on to chat individually and sell her books.



Thelwall 1100 Our board was in place at the Thelwall 1100 celebrations. A number of members of Committee and some of our other members were present to promote our u3a . A good number of the visitors took details and Newsletters.



Group Gossip

There has been a suggestion by Barbara to form a Fungi Group. This will obviously run more in the summer time than winter but if you are interested in Fungi or have any more ideas for groups please contact

me, Muriel, the Groups' Facilitator on groups@lymmthelwallu3a.org.uk

Thanks for all the groups' contributions to Group Gossip! Please send next month's contributions to newsletter@lymmthelwallu3a.org.uk

Advanced French

Here's a rare opportunity!

A place is available in the Advanced French group – this lovely group has been meeting twice a month since our u3a started and now uses a strong intermediate/advanced range of material. It's not suitable for beginners, but if you have reasonable French (eg an A level or knowledge gained from practise in a non-school environment) you might like to join us! Don't worry if your French is a bit rusty! We have some members who have been in the group since the start-up and others who've joined since. We meet on the second and fourth Thursday each month at 1030 at the Sanctuary Hub. You could come along for a taster session if you like, to see if it's for you! Contact Dinah Robertson via the website for more details.

Art

Today's suggestion for our Art Group was pointillism and most of us gave the new genre a go.



Badminton

Our two Badminton Groups continue in action every Wednesday morning between 9.00 a.m. and 11.00 a.m. at Grappenhall Community Centre, Bellhouse Lane, Grappenhall, at a current cost of £2 per session. Whilst the 9.00 a.m. Badminton Group is full, there are still a few **vacancies** for the second session each week starting at 10.00 a.m. at which new faces will be very welcome. Please email [Geoff Stocker](mailto:Geoff.Stocker@lymmthelwallu3a.org.uk) if you would like to join this session, noting that you do need to have played Badminton previously.

Book Club 1

Our choice for October was *The Constant Gardener* by John le Carré. Everyone enjoyed it, and some said it's the best book we have read in the group. It's a wonderful tale written by a master storyteller which tells of a man ennobled by the tragic murder of his wife and explores the dark side of unbridled capitalism. It is set in Kenya, with beautiful descriptions of the landscape, and characters working for the British High Commission who turn out to be embroiled in corruption at the highest level. The film is wonderful with an Oscar winning performance by Rachel Weiss as Tessa.



Book Club 2

At our October meeting we discussed 'The Wedding People' by the American author Alison Espach. Set in a week-long Rhode Island wedding party, it is a life-affirming, darkly comic story of a woman in despair who arrives at a hotel to find she is the only guest not part of the wedding group. Through a series of encounters she gradually moves towards a more authentic view of herself which leaves behind the darkness of her past experiences and opens up new possibilities. Along the way she provokes new levels of honest self-reappraisal in many of the guests she meets. We found the book at times poignant, romantic and funny, whilst dealing with issues of loss and the importance of facing the truths about ourselves.

Crown Green Bowling

The 2025 U3A Outdoor Crown Green Bowling season concluded at the end of September and will recommence in April. Whilst not an official u3a activity, High Legh Bowling Club runs indoor short mat Bowling sessions twice a week on Mondays and Wednesdays starting in October. Anyone is welcome to attend these sessions. They are very popular, so time on the mat can be limited. The charge last winter was £2 per session with a Winter Club Membership Fee of £8.

Current Affairs 1

At our last meeting, we discussed issues related to housing, including owner occupied property, private rented housing and social housing. There was particular discussion about the difficulties for younger generations trying to buy a home due to the huge increase in house prices and also about the purpose of housing whether it was helpful for it to be regarded as an appreciating financial asset rather than primarily as a home and place of shelter for an individual or a family. There was also discussion of the difficulties caused by the severe lack of social housing.

Flower Arranging

Flower Arranging group made a selection of door rings. They used a mix of foam ring, wire ring or willow base,



decorated with fresh or dry plant material. Many of the techniques can be used in rings to celebrate other seasons. Here are a selection of photographs.

Gardening

Visit to Tatton Park Japanese Garden 13th October morning and afternoon groups

Simon, the Head Gardener, took our two groups on the tour. He began by explaining about the history of the gardens, going back to the 1700s and the types of garden which were in vogue over the centuries. Apart from ancient trees and buildings, much of the planting has been more recent. There are gardens at Tatton which cover various countries including the Japanese Garden which was accessed over a bridge. He explained aspects of the garden representing clouds, forests, mountains, including Mount Fuji, gods and goddesses. There is a tea ceremony area, pagoda, lanterns and a shepherd's hut, some of which



were bought from a

Japanese exhibition in London's White City in 1910.

The autumn colours of the acer trees seen through the beauty of the garden were magnificent. A number of us enjoyed lunch in the Stables restaurant and everyone enjoyed the visit which was recommended by Lesley Keelty who had always walked around the Japanese garden but had not had the opportunity to visit if from the inside.



Genealogy

At our October meeting, Howard Rose, our guest speaker, gave us a brilliant presentation entitled 'Letter in a Handbag .. the journey from Nazi Germany to Cheshire'. This talk centred around his mother, who, as a girl was living happily with her Jewish family in Geisa, an idyllic German town, set in lovely countryside. However, as Nazi persecution escalated during the 1930's, her older brothers and sister emigrated to the US and, further to a British lady sponsoring her, his Mother aged 17 made her way across Europe to the UK to work in a hotel in Manchester. She met her husband to be in 1939, married in 1946 and thereafter brought up a family. After his mother's death, Howard found many letters in German in her handbag. These letters, along with information received from his US cousins, filled in many of the gaps in his family history. During May 2022, his family and some of his US relatives met in Geisa and with the permission of the town's mayor, were able to lay brass plaques in one of Geisa's cobble streets, each in memory of a relative who had suffered and/or died during the Nazi era.

This talk, which included many other fascinating family stories, was very much enjoyed by all.



German

At October's meeting we had a catch-up about where we've spent recent holidays. For 3rd November, we will each prepare a short presentation about a place we find interesting in a German speaking country. We've all spent time in German speaking countries and will be looking forward to hearing about other intriguing places to visit in the future.

Music Appreciation

Our last meeting on 9th October took the form of a fascinating musical presentation by member Alistair Beattie, 'Back from the Holidays' about the ways in which travels abroad have often been a source of inspiration for the great composers. We began in Prague where Mozart travelled for the first performance of his opera La Clemenza di Tito commissioned to celebrate there the coronation of Leopold II as King of Bohemia. We then travelled nearer home with Mendelssohn who was inspired by his visit to Scotland in 1829 to write his Fingal's Cave Overture. Our next visit was to Rome with Tchaikovsky in 1880 and we heard his Capriccio Italien. After a break for refreshments, Alistair then took us with Dvorak on his travels from Prague to New York where his time at the Conservatoire led to his String Quintet in E flat major, and we ended with the last movement of Mahler's Symphony No 5, composed mostly during his summer months in Austria.

Our November meeting: 13th November at 2.00 p.m. We give a very warm welcome to a live performance by members of the **Manchester University Students Chamber Choir**, who will be entertaining us with a selection of choral pieces to suit all musical tastes. Please note the slightly later time of 2.00 p.m. and that on this occasion we will be in the larger downstairs room at Lymm Youth and Community Centre with access from Bridgewater Street. New members are particularly welcome – you don't have to be a classical music buff! Just come along and give it a try. Call or message Roger on 07815 601447 so we know to expect you.

Poetry

Members shared their poems on Magic and Hallowe'en as well as discussing four poems on the same subject by other writers. The next meeting, at David's house, will be on Thursday, 4th December, usual time. The chosen subject for our own poems will be 'She stopped'!

Singing for Fun

Twenty or so of us – more sopranos and altos than tenors and basses – all in excellent singing form, attended Lymm Village Hall for our October singing session. The programme consisted of favourites from previous meetings, all of which were well known and able to be sung with bisto (or is it gusto?). Every song could be considered a classic and included the work of iconic performers such as Abba, The Beatles, The Drifters and Neil Diamond. Where appropriate, Jim shared with the group fascinating facts about the songs. For example, John Denver's "Rocky Mountain High" is one of only two official state songs in Colorado, a position it proudly shares with the iconic "Where the Columbines Grow". And who would have thought that Dolly's "Jolene" was based on a real person who was a bit too friendly with Dolly's husband!

We all enjoyed ourselves, laughed a lot and proved the adage that music is good for the soul, especially when it's sung.

Sketching Out



Tony

This month's visit was to the Christmas Tree Farm in Grappenhall where we were provided with coffee and croissants, inspiring us to great deeds with pencil and paint! The next meeting is at Altrincham Metro & Train Station on Monday, 24th November.



Neil

Stitch and Natter 2

Stitch and Natter 2 meet in the Spread Eagle at 2.00 p.m. Tuesday Afternoon. We had a cosy afternoon stitching and chattering. Please join us if you can.



Table Tennis

The new group began on 10th October with 20 members signing up. We all enjoyed the sessions and feel that we have improved already, given that some of us are very rusty and others have not played before. Thankfully there are a few seasoned experts who are patiently helping us to play better.

We are meeting weekly at the Lymm Youth and Community Centre, Bridgewater Street, Lymm, on each Friday from 10.15 to 11.45, allowing for an hour of play. Please join us if you are interested. Judith Hayward

Theatre

Our next outing is to the Garrick Theatre Altrincham, We are going to see 'It's a Wonderful Life' on Monday 17th November. 7.30 p.m. We are seated near P22 -26 if you want to join us just book a ticket and we will meet you in the Bar beforehand.

Walking Groups



Audlem. The name refers to the fastest boats once seen on the canal system. Duncan led out along the canal before taking us on a circular route through the countryside back for an excellent lunch at the pub. It was a lovely morning weather-wise to appreciate the Autumn tints.

Friday Rambles

Thirteen members, led by Kath, walked a seven and a half mile route around Jumbles Reservoir near Bolton. It's a particularly lovely walk as we see the Autumn tints in their full glory. Turton Tower, a Manor House dating from the Middle Ages, was our lunch spot.

4-6 ers

Twenty-three members met at the quaintly named Shroppie Fly pub by the Shropshire Union Canal in the village of



Strollers

Thankyou to everyone who has replied to the general Strollers email. If you have not replied and still want be in the group please let Sheila know. We are planning a walk for November. Members of the group will have details in an email.

Committee Contact Details

Chair	Susan Mitchell	chair@lymmthelwallu3a.org.uk
Vice Chair	Marcia Dale	vicechair@lymmthelwallu3a.org.uk
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u3a – Online Learning Events

As well as joining our groups you can subscribe to Interest Groups Online. Interest Groups Online is a platform for collaborative learning. It is an online community, bringing people together from across the u3a movement and beyond. There are around 70 different groups that meet online across a wide range of subjects. Groups are interactive and vary depending on the needs of the participants. Find out more on our [Interest Groups Online page](#).

Take Ten Songs 1: How Pop Songs Work

Thursday 20th November 10.00 a.m.

What this course is about:

- Listening to and dissecting ten popular songs to see if we can identify what makes them work
- A look under the hood of songwriting, recording and production (but no formal musical experience needed)
- The songs I've chosen aren't necessarily my favourites (although some are) but are picked to illustrate certain points about song structure and appeal
- Finally – please feel free to ask questions as we go through (and please pull me up if I stray too deep into musical theory!)

Lee is an amateur musician with a long-standing interest in many types of popular music. In particular, he has been, and remains, fascinated by the way music works and why it provokes certain emotions.

Take Ten Songs Week 1 In the first session of this short course, we take an overview of song structure and components – lyrics, production, arrangement, dynamics, verses, chorus, middle 8 etc.- and how they are used in popular songs. We will then dive into 4 popular songs – Eleanor Rigby, You've Lost That Lovin' Feelin', Up The Junction and Jive Talkin' – to see if we can deconstruct them and work out why they have the appeal that they have.

Catherine the Great 1762–1796

Discover how Catherine the Great's vision and ambition reshaped Russia into a European political power.

Monday 20th November 2.00 p.m. – 3.30 p.m.

Catherine the Great was such a successful ruler of Russia that even Vladimir Putin, reluctantly, looks up to her. It was after all Catherine that secured southern Ukraine for Russia.

Inspired by the Enlightenment she did her best to transform Russia from a medieval to a renaissance state and established Russia for the first time as a great European political, not just military, power.

If you like your history full of palace coups, conquests and culture, neoclassical architecture, sumptuous banquets, plenty of romance and sex and, last but not least, political relevance for today, then Catherine the Great is the Tsar for you.

Some of Catherine the Great's furniture featured sexual imagery, and selected examples will be shown and discussed during the talk – viewer discretion advised.

How to join these events which are free to members.

Use this link below to discover other-online learning events www.u3a.org.uk/events



The u3a radio podcast showcases the amazing things happening across the movement. It's created by a team of u3a members who all have radio experience and features interviews with members, interest group leaders, Trustees, national volunteers and Subject Advisers.

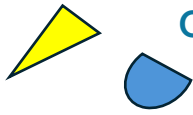
The entire series is available on our YouTube Channel. [Listen now](#)
The podcast is available on the usual podcast platforms including:

[Spotify](#)

[Apple Podcasts](#)

[Podtail](#)

The team is always looking for more stories – [please get in touch](#) via our contact form if you'd like to contribute. Or you can email us on communications@u3a.org.uk.



Our Groups If you would like to join any of our groups, groups@lymmthelwallu3a.org.uk always contact the Group leader via the group page on the website to email the Group Leader. They will reply to you!!

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Regular Meeting Day</i>	<i>Venue</i>
Art	Friday a.m.	St Mary's Church Hall
Badminton	Wednesday a.m.	Grappenhall Community Centre
Book Club	1 st Thursday a.m.	The Spread Eagle, Lymm
Book Club 2	1 st Wednesday a.m.	The Little Manor, Thelwall
Cinema	Occasional Outings	Various
Crown Green Bowling	Monday p.m.	High Legh Bowling Club
Current Affairs	2 nd Thursday lunchtime	The Spread Eagle
Current Affairs 2	3 rd Tuesday a.m.	Lymm Village Hall
Cycle Maintenance	As and when required	
Cycling	2 nd Tuesday and 4 th Thursday	Various, see website
Flower Arranging	2 nd Friday p.m.	St. Peter's Church Hall
French (Advanced)	2 nd and 4 th Thursday a.m.	The Sanctuary Hub Lymm
French Conversation Advanced	1 st Monday p.m.	The Spread Eagle Lymm
Games Group	1 st Tuesday p.m.	Maple Lodge, Lymm
Gardening	Various Days	Different Locations
Genealogy	3 rd Tuesday a.m.	Sanctuary Hub Lymm
German	1 st Monday a.m.	The Spread Eagle, Lymm
The Lunch Group	3 rd Friday	Contact via website
Mosaic	Friday a.m.	St. Mary's Church Hall
Music Appreciation	2 nd Thursday p.m.	Lymm Youth / Community Centre
Philosophy	2 nd and 4 th Tuesday a.m.	The Spread Eagle, Lymm
Poetry	4 th Thursday lunchtime	Sanctuary Hub Lymm
Singing For Fun	4 th Tuesday p.m.	Lymm Village Hall
Sketching Out	Last Monday of the Month	Various
Stitch 'n' Natter	Wednesday a.m.	The Little Manor, Thelwall
Stitch 'n' Natter 2	Tuesday p.m.	The Spread Eagle
Theatre and Concert	See web site	Various
Table Tennis	Friday a.m.	Lymm Youth and Community Centre
Ukulele 4 Fun	Tuesday evening	United Reform Church
Walking Strollers	Various	Various
Walking 4-6ers	Various	Various
Walking Friday Rambles	2 nd Friday	Various
Walking Striders	2 nd Wednesday	Various
Wellbeing Birdwatching	1 st and 3 rd Friday	Various Locations
Writing Group	1 st Friday	The Spread Eagle

Lymm and Thelwall u3a web site:

<https://lymm-thelwall.u3asite.uk/>

Lymm and Thelwall u3a Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/LymmThelwallu3a>



For those members who have no online access this letter can be posted to them.