



Dear All

I am sorry this newsletter is a couple of days late. The editorial team i.e Tim, David and myself have just returned from a superb holiday to Ayrshire with 43 of our members. Thanks to Tim who took his laptop to Scotland with him so he could put the last items into the Newsletter, ready for us to send on our return!!! There will be a report about the holiday in our next issue but, for now, we were lucky to have wall to wall sunshine! You will see in the Social section that a number of outings have been arranged. If you would like to join any please contact the person named in the advert. Our next Members's meeting is our A.G.M. We will make it as quick as possible then hold the normal Speaker's section.
Sue, Chair

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 21st May 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 21st May

Ian White

Stories of traffic accident investigation

The talk will introduce you to the world of Road Traffic Collision Investigation and to some of the systems which can be used by the expert in order to reconstruct a road traffic accident. The presentation will be given based on a reconstruction of a collision which was presented at an International Conference last year entitled 'Reconstruction of a Fatal Collision by using a Suite of Software Programs'.

Thursday 18th June

Martin Lloyd

Passports, Assassins, Traitors & Spies

Thrill to stories of how three passports have played their influential role in the course of history: an attempted assassination which altered the regulations for issuing passports; the capture of a spy which caused a worldwide modification to the design of the document and, for one person, the passport itself which turned into a killer.

Thursday 16th July

Jerry Jarvis

The Nuclear Deterrent and my part in your survival

A light-hearted journey through a young man's work on Nuclear Submarines. After qualifying as a technician, Jerry carried out testing and calibration on Britain's first two nuclear submarines. He spent some years in the UK defence industry holding directorships in BAe Systems, GEC, Marconi and Thorn-EMI Simtec. As Quality Director in Simtec, he is credited with solving problems that prevented manufacture of the army nerve agent detector, NAIAD. Whilst serving as a civil servant in Swan Hunter Shipyard he identified the problem of crippling corrosion affecting naval ships in the River Tyne. His packed career includes management of the UK's largest professional photography lab; winner of the prestigious Management Today national customer service award; patent for the first play anywhere CD; and a Master of Science degree in Management and Technology.

Dates for your Diary

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

Thursday 14th May	'100 years of Lymm from the Air' presentation at Lymm Heritage Centre
Thursday 21 st May	Members' Meeting and AGM
Thursday 18th June	Members' Meeting
Wednesday 24 th June	Amazon 'Behind The Scenes' Tour
Friday 26 th June	u3a Showcase, Lymm Festival Lymm Village Hall
Wednesday 8 th July	Manchester City Centre Cruise with lunch
Thursday 20 th August	Summer Delights at Laskey Farm

Committee News

Please find below a summary of the April 2026 Committee Meeting:

- **Chair:** highlighted an email received from u3a National, which included roles within u3a and information on fraud e.g. scammers asking for bank details from u3a members.
- **Secretary:** reported that the next round of AGM paperwork, due to be sent to members three weeks before the AGM, will, because of holidays, be distributed a few days earlier.
- **Treasurer:** reported on the Third Age Trust Regional Workshop, which he attended. He shared, amongst other things, key governance and financial insights including trustee responsibilities and the need for a budget to report against, a reserves policy and a financial policy.
- **Membership:** the 2026/7 membership process is ongoing and how to obtain feedback from those who have not renewed their membership was discussed.
- **Interest Groups:** a Risk Assessment reminder email has been sent to Group Coordinators and, further to group members' names being collated, Beacon has been updated where necessary.
- **Other updates:** covered upcoming social events, venues, IT, publicity, our u3a's tenth anniversary in 2027, policies and newsletter alongside actions to improve organisation, communication and future planning.

Renewing membership

With the new membership year commencing in April, most members have now renewed their Membership. If not please do so asap This will be £10 per member for the year. You can pay:

Remotely via the internet

1. Via the u3a website and a credit/debit card on the membership page at

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

2. Via a bank transfer to our account at Lloyds Bank, Lymm & Thelwall U3A, 30-98-93, 68806068. Please enter ZRENEW and your Name and u3a number into the Reference.

Members' Meeting by David

Suzan Holder is a lady of many talents having appeared in front of and behind camera in television as well as working in radio, newspapers, theatre and as a columnist for Cheshire Life. Originally, Suzan trained as a journalist, having been spotted aged nine by her primary school teacher. In a lively and humorous talk Suzan emphasised that writing underpins all aspects of her life. In recent years she has also written three romantic comedy books. Suzan gave us an insight into some of the strange and madcap adventures that have inspired her stories and talked about having to get over a lack of confidence about appearing in public. Her most devoted fan is her husband, Noddy Holder, no stranger to success himself as lead singer of Slade.

Marcia Dale gave the vote of thanks after Suzan's well-received talk.





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. Alternatively, come and join our team!

An evening presentation at Lymm Heritage Centre "100 years of Lymm from the air"

Thursday 14th May 7.30 p.m. – 9.00 p.m.

The cost is a minimum donation of £5 per person. All proceeds go to the Heritage Centre. To book your place please contact [Sue](#)

Limited space
available

We are sailing.....**Wednesday 8th July 11.00 a.m.**

A City Centre Cruise with lunch from Castlefield on the waterways of Manchester and Salford. **The cost** is £35 and includes a 3-course lunch.

For more information and to book a seat please contact [Christine](#)

Last few
spaces



Join us for a **"Behind the Scenes" Tour** of the

Amazon Fulfilment Centre at Bolton Wednesday 24th June at 1.00 p.m.

To book your place asap (as spaces are limited) please contact [Sue](#)



Summer Delights at Laskey Farm

Thursday 20th August 2.00 p.m.

We will be shown around the beautiful gardens, have time to socialise and also enjoy refreshments. Price £6

If you would like to book a place please contact [Janet](#)

RAF Burtonwood

A second group of members enjoyed a visit to the RAF Burtonwood Heritage Centre. We learned about the involvement of the Americans at Burtonwood during WWII. It was the largest USAAF base in Europe. Whilst seated in the fuselage of an aircraft, we saw a film showing the Berlin Airlift and the important role Burtonwood played in getting the planes in the air. There were many interesting stories and anecdotes from our tour guides, covering everything from visits of VIP Generals to GI brides.



Group Gossip

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

As reported last month, the Ancient Empires and Civilisations group has held a preliminary meeting and agreed to start in September.

A new French group is being set up, which will be at a lower level than the two existing groups. This group will be for people who did French to 'O' level and would like to improve. The group will possibly be called "French Improvers" or something similar and will be following the text book 'Façon de Parler 2'. Members of the advanced French conversation group have kindly agreed to take it in turns to guide the learning so having a text book to follow will help with that too. We are compiling a list of names of anyone interested in joining this group and then we will organise a meeting of those interested in order to discuss finer details such as day, time, venue, etc. If either or both of the above groups interests you or you have any other ideas for groups, please contact Muriel, the Groups' Facilitator, at groups@lymmthelwallu3a.org

Art

Members of the Art Group have produced some weather-related pictures and some were inspired by the theme of 'feathers'. Other members of the group choose their own subject and their paintings will be displayed at the u3a exhibition in June. Once again, the group is working towards a joint project for the exhibition but you'll have to wait till then to see our masterpiece!



Book Group

In April the Thursday Book Group discussed 'The Silence of the Girls' by Pat Barker. This book is based on the story of the Trojan War seen from the women's perspective. They were treated as part of the spoils of war, shared out by the winning side as bedfellows, slaves or left to fend for themselves and many of them were brutally killed if they were pregnant. This is a relentlessly bloodthirsty tale with the hero, Achilles, killing and mutilating on the battlefield and then grieving for the death of his friend Patroclus. It is revealing to hear the women's side of the story and heartwarming to read of the bonds they formed to sustain each other. A good read but not the author's best work.

Book Group 2

At our April meeting we discussed 'Three Men in a Boat' by Jerome K Jerome. We enjoyed the snapshot of life in late-Victorian England among the three young friends (not to mention the dog, Montmorency). From hypochondria to disasters of packing for an outdoors jaunt, troubles with tow ropes and unyielding tins of pineapple chunks, the adventures amused us, whilst an authorial voice behind the characters raised deeper issues of how we see the past and present, desperation and suicide, and social pretensions. Some readers were irritated by the stylisation, and sheer incompetence of the characters. Generally, we saw it as a humorous piece of escapism.

Jigsaws: Many thanks as always to those members who donate their jigsaws so that they can be enjoyed by our members. Please take as long as you like to complete them and remember that I am bringing only half of them every month. If you see one you like, take it as it won't be on offer the next month – my car is not big enough to bring them all at once! Pauline xx Choose your next puzzles at the Members' Meeting!

Current Affairs 2

After some debate, the March meeting took David Cockayne's suggestion, made for the last meeting, as the basis for discussion. Its title was 'Money, Men and Power' and proposed that many countries had very unequal societies which resulted in more crime, many in prison, social problems and poor educational outcomes. This was thought to be partly due to the domination of many areas of leadership by men and the frequent lack of women's presence. A wide-ranging discussion covered the areas suggested but also ranged across positive discrimination; the aims of higher education and the problems young people have in starting their careers; the structure of society and democracy, how it came about and the need to make as many decisions as possible locally, where it matters and where there is real knowledge; the over-inflated UK tax system; world issues involving the current conflicts; the nature of democracy and its failings in the United States and whether or not King Charles should make his planned visit there. Few conclusions were drawn but, on the latter, it was broadly felt a visit in the current circumstances would be inappropriate. We did wonder if subjects ought to be known further in advance; the suggested topic for April was Anxiety.

Flower Arranging



Designs below by the Flower Arranging group at our April workshop

Each month we share an idea and interpret to reflect our own style. Open to all levels of experience, we meet at St Peter's Church Hall, on the second Friday of each month. Parking available at rear of hall. Visitors and new members welcome.

See our web page for contact button and photos from other workshops
<https://lymm-thelwall.u3asite.uk/u3a.../flower-arranging>



French Conversation



Our travels continued to towns where French is spoken. We heard about Cheticamp in Nova Scotia, Canada where a mix of people of various origins live, the majority being Acadians who settled from France in the 17th and 18th centuries. Until 1948 there were no roads to Cheticamp, which is now a popular tourist destination.



We looked at a Canadian French dictionary and the differences there are between their vocabulary and the French as spoken in France. Some of the differences led to considerable laughter and could have resulted in great embarrassment if used incorrectly.

We discussed some things that are done better in French speaking countries than here and vice versa. One of the most notable was the considerable time the French spend over family meals.

Fruit and Vegetable Growers

In March the group met at a member's house to discuss their current activities at the start of the new growing season. Several members already have tomato plants growing and various other seeds currently germinating, including broad beans, cucumber, sweet and chilli peppers and even fennel. Those new to veg growing were given some tips and advice by the experienced growers and some seeds were shared. Later in the season we will have some practical meetings at one or two of the allotments.



Gardening



22 members visited Laskey Farm Garden on 16th April. Wendy, who owns the garden, told us how her husband had inherited the farm from his great great-grandfather and how, over the years, they had not only developed the beautiful garden but also set up small units for businesses. She showed us how to take cuttings of dahlias and after a walk around the beautiful garden with numerous ponds, we had cake and refreshments whilst the heavens opened and we got soaked going to our cars.



16 of us enjoyed a lovely sunny afternoon in Kath Brown's garden on 22nd April in Appleton. She explained that they had lived there over 30 years and did not want any grass when planning the garden. With a lovely mixture of shrubs, seating areas and a sizable pond we enjoyed Kath's homemade fruit cake and biscuits. A big thank you, Kath.



German

Our April meeting theme was "special photos." We heard about Gill's visit to Canada to see her new granddaughter; Catherine showed us a postcard of the Brandenburg Gate & the fall of the Berlin wall, which featured her husband, David, and a photo taken 5 months ago of the Strait of Hormuz in happier times; Roger showed us a photo of Prestbury church, which is special to him because he got married there and also several relatives are now buried there; Alistair brought a photos of his wedding day and 50th wedding anniversary - in one photo the bride is holding flowers, in the other whisky!

Music Appreciation

At our April meeting, one of our members, **MIKE COATES**, presented music by **Giacomo Puccini** (1858–1924), one of his favourite composers. Mike was introduced to Puccini's music at an early age by his grandfather. Puccini wrote numerous operas and is noted for a style which expresses human emotion and tells compelling stories. We listened to some of Mike's favourite recordings from La Bohème, Madama Butterfly, and Tosca. We finished with the beautiful intermezzo from Manon Lescaut. A big thank you to Mike for this absorbing and relaxing afternoon.

The next meeting will be on 14th May when member **ROGER DOWLING** will give an illustrated presentation '**The Masters of British Light Music**'. The early growth of the cinema and radio in the UK stimulated the market for tuneful, well-written light music, much of which remains popular and familiar today. But unlike their classical music counterparts, the names and backgrounds of these composers are largely unknown: in Roger's presentation, we listen to a selection of their minor masterpieces and explore how they came to be composed.



Quizzicals

Last month's Quizmaster for the day was Gentleman Jim Owen who set an interesting and diverse set of questions and, as always, a joke was not far away. It's quite amazing how much is remembered under pressure but there were still 'I said that' when the answers were revealed! This month's quiz is being hosted by Linda Brooks so why not come along and join in the fun and frolics? The date for the next quiz is 19th May at The Hub starting at 2 o'clock.

Poetry

We recited our own poems on the subject of 'Dreams' then shared favourite pieces by two writers who died on this day, William Shakespeare and William Wordsworth.

Next meeting: Thursday, 28th May, Sanctuary Hub, Lymm Library, 12.30 p.m..

Singing for Fun

This month's meeting was hosted by Marcia - no stranger to leading singing groups - with sound engineering again in Mike's capable hands.

After joining ABBA in "Thank You for the Music" - always our first number - the session moved on to sing a wonderful mixture of classic pop from the likes of Dolly Parton, The Kinks, The Drifters and the Beatles. The majority were songs from the 60's and 70's - our era for most of us - with a couple from the 80's and even one from this century - the 2008 hit for Jason Mraz (that's the way it's spelled) 'I'm Yours'.

As usual, there emerged one or two interesting facts about the songs and singers. The Three Degrees were great favourites of King Charles and performed live at his 30th birthday party. The working lyric for The Beatles' 'Yesterday' was 'scrambled eggs, oh my baby how I love your legs, not as much as I love scrambled eggs'. Sing it to yourself - it fits! Probably a good place to finish. Bye.

Sketching Out

A challenging subject this month, the Anderton Boat Lift. It was a beautiful morning, however, and we were pleased with our efforts.

The next meeting is on Monday 1st June at the Christmas Tree Farm in Grappenhall, from 10.15 a.m.



Walking Groups

Strollers



Thirteen Strollers took a gentle walk around Marbury Park and some of its bluebell-swathed woodlands. Some interesting history about the old hall there can be read on the FoAM (Friends of Marbury and Anderton) website. After the old hall's stepped terraced, a woodland stroll took us by Budworth Mere and along woodland paths, a footbridge over the Trent & Mersey Canal, returning via a further loop and old Marbury Lane. A delicious lunch was then enjoyed at the helpful and welcoming Spinner & Bergamot pub.

4-6 ers

A gloriously sunny day in April saw a group of 4-6ers taking in the delights of Lyme Park. On paths flat and rocky, high and low we enjoyed outstanding views over open moorland, the Cheshire plain and the Manchester cityscape. A sweeping Swallow at the start was a good 'nature omen' for the day with groups of deer in several places, a slow-moving toad and abundant wildflowers of various colours. We walked, we chatted, we breathed in good country air. Nothing could be better!



Friday Ramblers

The Friday Ramblers gathered at Sankey Valley Visitor Centre near St Helens for a mainly flat, 8-mile walk. We enjoyed birdsong, bluebells, sunshine and trees newly in leaf plus lots of chat and laughter. Our lunch stop was on 19 Arch Bridge, with a view of Carr Mill reservoir. The walk finished with a welcome drink at the pub beside the visitor centre.





Striders

Can you believe it? Striders on the hottest day in April! An 8.5 mile walk from Sutton Reservoir taking in Croker Hill and along the Gritstone Trail. Excellent walk and company though one member definitely needs new boots, current ones falling apart on the walk and had to be held together with an additional boot lace!



Wellbeing Birdwatching

Fifteen members were out on one of our core venues, Lymm Dam, at the start of the Easter weekend. A rather strangely quiet day given the holiday weekend, both regarding birds and even other people walking there. Remarkably there were no gulls in or over The Dam and just one Great Crested Grebe. However, the best sighting of the day was the Goldcrest seen by Pete and Andrew near Crosfield Bridge, a regular spot to see these smallest of our native birds. You can also be lucky in occasionally seeing them near the Wishing Bridge.



Wild Things

On a sunny spring day, we started in jackets and ended up with at least one fewer layer on our walk through The Bongs. We sampled citrusy Wood Sorrel and inhaled the scent of fragrant Wild Garlic. We saw swathes of Bluebells, clusters of Forget-me-nots and small Dog Violets. March Marigolds hugged the riverbanks, Wood Anemones carpeted sections of the woodland floor and a solitary Cowslip shone golden beneath a stand of Willows. And the learning didn't stop there as one of our members did some post-walk homework telling us that 'bongs' is an old Cheshire corruption of the French 'les bancs' meaning banks.



Writing Group

As a group we normally meet up on the first Friday in the month for our fun get together but in May, we will be meeting up on the 8th. We will be exploring our responses to the theme of audiences and the meeting will be at the Spread Eagle 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

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](#)

These are a sample of the online event on offer. There are plenty more to choose from. Use this link below to the other online learning events available. www.u3a.org.uk/events



The Call of the Wild: Stories from the Frontiers of Exploration

Join polar explorer and expedition leader Alex McNeil for an illustrated talk drawn from nearly two decades across the Arctic & Antarctica.

Tuesday 12 May at 2pm.

Free – online via Zoom



Enormous numbers and where to find them

The number of atoms in the Universe is estimated at 10^{80} (that's a one followed by 80 zeros). Join Dr Richard Elwes to find out more.

Friday 8 May at 2pm

Free – online via Zoom



Drones, huh? What are they good for?

Dr Steve Bullock gives his view of drones and their growing and evolving role in our skies.

Friday 29 May at 2pm

Free – online via Zoom



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:

North West Residential Summer School

Tuesday 11th August – Friday 14th August
Manchester Metropolitan University

Residential and Non Residential. A number of Courses are on offer.

For full details see the [North West region Website](#)



[Lymm and Thelwall u3a web site](#)

[Lymm and Thelwall u3a Facebook page](#)



Here is a link to the [North West Region](#)

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

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

Activity	Regular Meeting Day	Venue
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 1	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
Fruit and Vegetable Growers	Various	Various Locations
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
MOTO	Various	Various
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
Quizzicals	3 rd Tuesday p.m.	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
Wild Things	Various	Various
Writing Group	1 st Friday	The Spread Eagle