

Dear All,

It was so lovely to see so many of you braving the cold weather to attend the January Meeting. Allen, our Membership Secretary, informed us that there were 91 members and eight visitors in the hall and that we now have 300 members. It is amazing how we have grown and that is down to the warmth and friendliness of you, our members, welcoming new people. Thankyou.

Marcia and I felt a welcome of warmth and friendliness when we popped into St. Mary's Hall after Wellbeing Birdwatching around the Dam. We were bitterly cold after a couple of hours walking and it was so lovely and snug in the Hall. The room was a hive of industry! What a variety of work we witnessed with the Art Group, some doing water colour, someone doing collage and another using pastels. We saw the Mosaic Group grouting work, sticking tiles on, the start of a mosaic totem pole and also a bird table for the garden. Whilst we were there the Mosaicers asked if any member has any tiles no longer needed. If so, could they please donate them to the group.

You will have now received an email about our up and coming meetings regarding the Drop In and the Walking Group. If you missed it there is more information in this newsletter.

Sue, Chair

Members' Meetings – Christine Ballance

*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. However, the next meeting will be on*

Thursday 15th February at **Grappenhall Community Centre, Bellhouse Lane, Grappenhall**
10.00 a.m. for a 10.30 a.m. start. **Refreshments will be served from 10.00 a.m. until 10.15 a.m.**
Do come along early for a drink and a chat.

Thursday 15th February **George Sephton** **The Voice of Anfield**

George will talk about his 53 seasons as the Stadium Announcer at Liverpool Football Club including the scrapes he's got into & the adventure of writing his book after fifty years in the job.

Thursday 21st March **David Skillen** **Starfish, Stripes and Decoys**

A look at Camouflage and Deception from the Trojan Horse to Desert Storm.

Thursday 18th April **Angela Berry** **Merseyside & Cheshire Blood Bikes**

MCBB is a non-profit making charity that provides support for the NHS through carrying urgently required blood, medicines, samples and donated human milk between hospitals, clinics, hospices and laboratories across Merseyside and Cheshire. They are all volunteers and provide free transport 365 days a year, whether that be by manning the phones or riding motorcycles to deliver urgent items for the NHS.

Important

The **February meeting** will be held at Grappenhall Community Centre, Bellhouse Lane, Grappenhall as it is half term and the Thelwall Parish Hall is being used by the Ferry Link Holiday Club.



The Refreshment Team have been doing a fantastic job serving 90 plus drinks these past few months. Thankyou. However, they have asked please arrive before 10.15 a.m. if you want a drink as late arrivals are proving difficult to cater for. Thanks.

Spotlight on the Members' Meeting by Sue Clarke 'How I ended up in prison'

Our February speaker was Dr. Karen Castle who gave us a fascinating and amusing insight into her prison service career. She was the first qualified female nurse to be appointed as a Medical Prison Officer. This was an experiment to assess how a female presence might affect prison riot numbers. It was very successful. The talk and listen approach proved a calming influence, preventing many riots developing. Karen recalled experiences and observations encountered during her career. They were illustrated by interesting situations and characters and reinforced the u3a mantra 'learn, laugh, live'.

Karen fretted about being a couple of inches short of the required height for a Prison Officer but with trusty Tetley tea bags secreted in her tights under her heels she made the height and minced through the medical with no problems. Her diminutive stature proved advantageous later in duties when offensive items like excrement and dangerous objects were hurled around. A quick duck of the head saved her many times. Yes, size does matter. Tetley tea bags are most efficient at water absorption and fast reflexes in the vertically challenged can prevent head injury.

Interesting characters met included the suave, Saville Row suited Mr Bint, a frighteningly intelligent man with impeccable manners. Upon initial meeting Karen assumed he was a lawyer. However, he was an accomplished fraudster passing himself off as a surgeon and, then later, after studying during his incarceration, an airline pilot. When moving on from nursing to the prison service Karen thought she'd applied for the Army. However, she'd attended a doctors' boozy bonfire party the night before the interviews! Karen attended psychological support sessions with prisoners and therapists often wondering which of them needed help most. Think we all have those thoughts about people, ourselves excepted, of course. Karen shared many useful skills learnt from inmates including hot wiring a car, housebreaking with a credit card, avoiding parking charges, the strength of Izal toilet paper, making deadly weapons and issues around drugs.

Pauline gave the vote of thanks, reinforcing the importance of our public services. Thanks also to Christine for organising such interesting speakers.

Events and Social – Any ideas for events please contact socialevents@lymmthelwallu3a.org.uk

The Events and Social Team met last Tuesday to plan some fun events for this year. More details will emerge however please put these dates in your diary.



Drop In

Thursday 22nd February at 3.00 p.m. The Spread Eagle, Lymm, upstairs room.

Tuesday 5th March at 3.00 p.m. The Spread Eagle, Lymm, upstairs room.

We are planning to hold a regular u3a drop in where members old and new can meet and those wishing to join our u3a can come along to find out more about what is happening in Lymm & Thelwall u3a. It will be a chance for you to express ideas and suggestions or just be sociable and have the chance to relax in the warm company of friends. New groups could meet to discuss their plans. Maybe bring a game to play.

In the future we are planning to hold this in Lymm Village Hall. However, while the roof of the hall is being repaired, we are meeting up at the Spread Eagle on the dates above. We have chosen a Thursday and a Tuesday to see which day is more convenient going forward.

If you cannot make either of these meetings and have any suggestions or ideas please email Lynn at lynnbryantu3a@outlook.com.



Mad March Social Event

Thursday 28th March 1.00 p.m. at Lymm Village Hall.

An informal, social get together open to ALL members.

Enjoy a buffet lunch and light-hearted entertainment.

Cost will be confirmed

These social events are popular. Register your interest now by emailing Lynn at lynnbryantu3a@outlook.com



Future Dates

Thursday 25th April **Drop In** Lymm Village Hall (time to be confirmed)

Thursday 23rd May **Drop In** Lymm Village Hall (time to be confirmed)

News from our Interest Groups - Muriel Howarth groups@lymmthelwallu3a.org.uk

We are delighted that our new poetry group has held its first meeting and also pleased to say that the new I.T. Group has made a great start. There are five people interested in Bridge at the moment so they need at least three more to form a group!!

Also please contact me, Muriel, on the email address above if you have any ideas for other new clubs. You don't have to be an **expert in a subject, just share an interest** with others as the idea is that we all learn together.

Walking Groups Meeting

Tuesday 6th February at 3.00 p.m. The Spread Eagle, Lymm, upstairs room.

There is a lot of interest in walking in our u3a and at the moment the three walking groups have a large number of members and while this is an encouraging thing we have a problem that not everyone who wants to walk can as the walks soon fill up. We have been asked if we can provide more walking groups and we will need more walk leaders. This meeting is to try and sort this issue out.

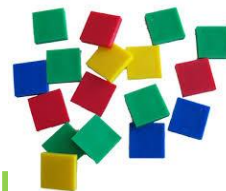
We welcome current walking group members, especially if you have any ideas to help us solve the issue or if you could set up an additional walking group. Also, members interested in joining one of the groups.



Jigsaws Thank you to all those members who kindly donated their jigsaws at the monthly meeting held on 18th January. Going forward, members are welcome to borrow the jigsaws on display at monthly meetings. Please return them when you have finished. Any further donations will be gratefully received.

I am a bit of a 'jigsawholic' and always have one on the go. I find them very relaxing and feel that they keep my brain active. I hope those who participate get as much enjoyment out of them as I do.
Pauline

Thanks, Pauline, for the hours that I have used up doing this puzzle!! I had managed to wean myself off puzzles when I moved here! I sent them all to the charity shop, however, my addiction has now been reignited by you! Sue, Chair



Tiles

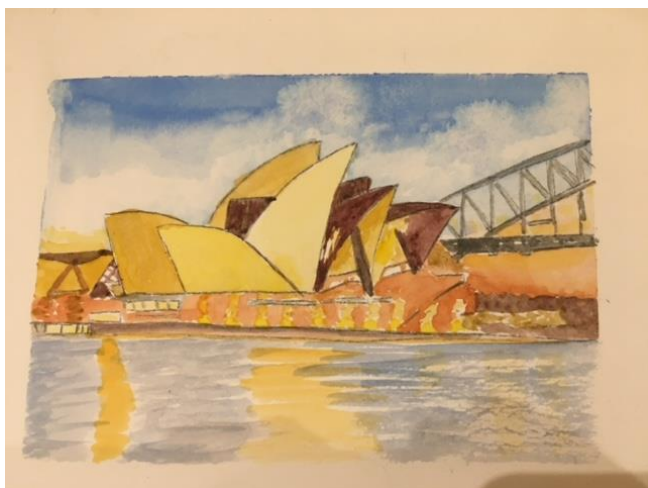
If you have any tiles that you no longer need please donate them to the Mosaic group! You can bring them to the Members' Meeting where, hopefully, a Mosaicer will gladly receive them!

Group Gossip

A big thankyou to all the group leaders who sent in updates for the Group Gossip. Please send any updates to me, Sue Mitchell, at newsletter@lymmthelwallu3a.org.uk by **Thursday 22nd February**.

Art and Mosaic Groups

It's sometimes hard to find our mojo in the winter months so our optional weekly art theme comes into its own when inspiration fails. In January the themes include Poems and Street Scene. We will also be enjoying experimenting with acrylics. The Mosaic Group is very busy, with an ever expanding range of projects which includes fence posts and bird tables this month. Following our open day we are encouraged to have new members both for Mosaics and Art. We meet on Friday mornings at St Mary's at 10.15 a.m.-12.15 p.m. Art and Mosaic groups are open to new members to join our relaxed and friendly creative members. We hope to see you joining us in February.



Bowling

Although not an 'official' u3a activity, indoor short-mat bowling takes place on Monday afternoons in High Legh Village Hall from 1.30 p.m. to 3.30 p.m. Subs for Winter Indoor Season: £6. Weekly Session Fee : £2. Outdoor Crown Green Bowling will resume around the end of next March.

Badminton

This group is now at capacity so I have opened a "Waiting List" for any future interested members. Please email Geoff for addition to the "Waiting List" via our web page, noting that you need to have played Badminton previously.

I.T. Group

The I.T. Group is up and running and although this group of sessions is full a waiting list for future sessions can be formed.

Flower Arranging

Friday's Flower Arranging group tried something different. Copper mesh, sisal, dried hydrangea, needle felt, with small tubes and a selection of winter flowers. Do a design of your choice, or try the suggestion. Check out our web page if you would like to join us.



Genealogy

A good turn out to our first meeting of the year. Kathryn entertained us with a presentation on the colourisation of black and white photos accompanied with some she had changed. She then proceeded to delight us by turning members' pictures to colour with her app. Thanks Kathryn

Poetry

Ten members gathered in the Sanctuary Hub at Lymm Library for the first monthly meeting. After introductions, each shared favourite poems and opinions on what poetry meant to them. It was a stimulating start and organiser Rick Varden, 'The Urban Poet', set us a topic to consider for next time. 'Family'.

Sketching Out

We will be SKETCHING IN at the Pickering Arms, Thelwall again this month on Monday 26th February 10.15 a.m. for 10.30 a.m. start then sketching up to lunchtime.

The Manager (Helen) said that at that time of day we can again have the run of the place to sketch inside the pub where it is nice and warm, as there is a lovely log fire burning in a decorative fireplace - some may wish to choose that as their subject. Hoping to see you all there. Any queries - please give me a call or contact me through our website page.

Walking Groups

Striders

Bollin Valley and Lindow Moss.

The plan for the January walk had been to do an eight mile walk from Kingsley. However, with the amount of rain we had had we knew it would be a quagmire so plan B was a nine mile walk in Bollin Valley and Lindow Moss. Having been told we could park for free at Quarry Bank Mill I thought for once we would have toilets at the start of the walk but we managed to choose the one week where everything was closed for renovation work!



The weather was in our favour and sixteen of us had a very good walk along the Bollin Valley, into Wilmslow then around Lindow Moss stopping for lunch on some random tree trunks - well it made a change from sitting on traffic barriers on the last walk!

Next walk is Billing Hill on 14th February. Obviously the nineteen who have signed up so far have nothing romantic planned for the day!!

4-ers

Twenty-four members enjoyed the latest walk, from The Ring O'Bells at Daresbury. Neil led us out on a four mile route across the Cheshire countryside. It



was a lovely sunny morning. We passed through Moore and along the Bridgewater Canal back to the pub for lunch.

Theatre Group

Question....Who will tell your story? Answer: Lin-Manuel Miranda as one of the many exciting songs in this award winning musical Hamilton now showing to sell out audiences at Manchester Palace Theatre until the end of February....and enjoyed by the Theatre Group this last month.

Is it educational?

Yes, a musical history lesson on the founding fathers of the United States and Alexander Hamilton in particular. Is it entertaining? Most definitely...the cast are amazing...the music is superb from rapping and hip hop with a nod to the Beatles and even Gilbert and Sullivan to the pathos of ballads moving you to tears...there is drama in the political thriller story including "pistols at dawn" with seduction and non-stop choreography...and an endearing King George. What a treat we enjoyed...we put up with the cramped seats from our perfect centre circle view and agreed we would do the same again...if only we could get tickets! So many thanks to Elisabeth and Lynn for faultless arrangements in arranging this...we loved it.



Wellbeing/Birdwatching

Fourteen met outside St Mary's Church for a cold walk round Lymm Dam, more likely to see brass monkeys than anything else! The water was largely frozen but we did spot a variety of species darting in and out of the trees and bushes including great tit, wren, nuthatch, tree creepers, song thrush and the star of the show, the goldcrest. However, at this point, due to too much gossiping, the main group became separated from the diligent members so most of us missed them. I think Alan and Jim will do anything to be sacked from their duties as pusher-on-ers!!



Writing Group formerly called Storytellers

This is a relaxed fun group which meets on the first Friday of every month in the Spread Eagle in Lymm. Each month we write to a topic that is set the previous month - this can include looking at a specific genre such as comedy or horror. We discuss our attempts in a positive way and hope to learn from each other. We also do sessions on self-publishing and we have a go at poetry writing as well. You do not need to have written anything before - just come along, have fun and hopefully gain some tips for the future.

Ukulele 4 Fun

We have had a good turn-out at the last few meetings. We continue to enjoy new and old tunes "I'm an Urban Spaceman" has been a popular choice this time, especially with kazoos. The Bonzo Dog Doo -Dah Band have nothing on us!

Risk Assessment Advice

Members are reminded that, when participating in Lymm and Thelwall's u3a activities, they do so at their own risk. This is particularly relevant when undertaking any physical activity.

As well as joining our groups you can subscribe to Interest Groups Online (formerly called Trust u3a). 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](#).

Committee Contact Details

Chair	Susan Mitchell	chair@lymmthelwallu3a.org.uk
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Non-Committee:		
Speakers	Christine Ballance	speakers@lymmthelwallu3a.org.uk
Newsletter	Sue Mitchell	newsletter@lymmthelwallu3a.org.uk

u3a – Online Learning Events

Introduction to the Air Fryer, with simple recipes

Thursday 8th February 11.30 a.m. - 12.30p.m.

Air fryers(AF) are small, convection ovens, not deep fat fryers at all.

A powerful fan oven and small surface area means that they heat up quickly and cook speedily. For example, a whole small chicken will cook in 50 minutes.

Thinking of buying an AF?

Don't limit yourself by buying too small an appliance. Go for at least a medium sized air fryer and invest in a good cookbook,

Always go for quality when buying a machine. Maybe a good idea to be recommended by friends.

In my opinion, the AF is better than the microwave, as it produces crisp results quickly. Great for students, solo cooks, busy families, older people....in fact anybody. It is generally a brilliant way to cook!

Versatility

You can reheat cooked foods, bake a pie, or a cake. Cook fluffy rice and even boil eggs for breakfast.

Dishes that will be demonstrated

Frozen sausages and chips

Cheese and garlic bread

Stuffed Bell peppers

Vegetable medley

Indian salmon

Banana and berry muffins

This event is for u3a members only.

How to join these events

These online events are free for members. Use this link below to discover the online learning events www.u3a.org.uk/events

David Hockney and the Theatre

Friday 23rd February 2.00 p.m.- 3.00 p.m.

Through sound and video, art historian Peter Webb brings Hockney's theatre to life.

David Hockney has enjoyed visiting the theatre ever since his early years in Bradford. During his studies at the Royal College of Art in the early sixties, his work often used the stage as a device. His first steps in the world of theatre were cartoon-style sets and costumes for Alfred Jarry's absurdist play *Ubu Roi* for the Royal Court Theatre in London in 1966. It was not until 1974 that he had another opportunity when he was invited to produce designs for Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress* for the Glyndebourne Festival Opera. These witty, inventive variations on the crosshatched engraving style of William Hogarth brought public and critical enthusiasm.

By means of sound and video Hockney's theatre is brought to life.



Contact Us

Lymm and Thelwall u3a web site:

[Lymm & Thelwall u3a: Welcome To Lymm & Thelwall u3a \(u3asites.org.uk\)](http://Lymm & Thelwall u3a: Welcome To Lymm & Thelwall u3a (u3asites.org.uk))

Lymm and Thelwall u3a Facebook page:

Lymm & Thelwall u3a - Home | Facebook

enquiries@lymmthelwallu3a.org.uk

National u3a News

If you would like to sign up for the National Newsletter or the North West Region Newsletter please use the links below

u3a National newsletter

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/news/newsletter>

North West Region Newsletter

<https://u3asites.org.uk/north-west/page/25318>

Our Groups If you would like to join any of our groups please always contact the Group leader via the group page on the website. Click the icon to email the Group Leader. They will reply to you!!

If you have any ideas for a new group please contact Muriel groups@lymmthelwallu3a.org.uk our Group Coordinator and she will be able to advise how a new group can be formed.

Activity	Regular Meeting Contact	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
Crown Green Bowling	Monday p.m.	High Legh Bowling Club
Climate and Environment	1 st Thursday p.m.	
Cinema	Occasional Outings	Various
Cycle maintenance	As and when required	
Cycling	2 nd Tuesday and 4 th Thursday	Various, see web site
Flower Arranging	2 nd Friday p.m.	St. Mary's Church Hall
French (Advanced)	2 nd and 4 th Thursday a.m.	The Sanctuary Hub Lymm
French Conversation Intermediate and Advanced	1 st Monday p.m.	The Spread Eagle Lymm
Genealogy	3 rd Tuesday am	Lymm Village Hall
German	Monday	Private home and via zoom
I.T.Group	2 nd and 4 th Wednesday a.m.	Lymm Baptist Church
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	Sanctuary Hub Lymm
Sketching Out	Last Monday of the Month	Various
Stitch 'n' Natter	Wednesday a.m.	The Little Manor, Thelwall
Theatre and Concert	See web site	Various
Ukulele 4 Fun	Tuesday evening	United Reform Church
Walking Strollers	See website	Various
Walking 4-6ers	See Website	Various
Walking Striders	2 nd Wednesday	Various
Wellbeing Birdwatching	Friday a.m. fortnightly	Various Locations
Writing Group /formally Storytellers	1 st Friday	The Spread Eagle



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

Recycling update
 Sorry we have had to stop our recycling collections at the Members' Meetings. However, we still collect old glasses without the cases and also stamps. If you are willing to take in your own recyclables, Superdrug and some other pharmacies accept medicine blister packs and most opticians will take contact lens packaging.