



Poynton News

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

poyntonu3a.org.uk

Issue 32-8

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Editorial

Welcome to the eighth edition of our new style newsletter. This issue has less pages than previous ones. There are some important comments from the Chairman but not many contributions from members this time. If you would like to contribute to the next edition, send text and pictures to news@poyntonu3a.org.uk.

Poynton U3A Update

If I had been asked to devise a way of completely destroying the U3A movement in the UK, I am sure that I couldn't have done better than invent Covid-19. Enforced isolation and a requirement for social distancing across all ages with few if any exceptions strikes at the very heart of an organisation built for expanding social experiences. We were faced with the enormity of the initial and sudden shock which has impacts on all aspects of our lives. Now we are beginning to see how we might adapt. The next 18 months will be of the greatest importance to our U3A as controls are released. But the experiences which we have all had will remain with us and have impacts on how we operate as we gradually emerge into a very different future from that which any of us could have imagined.

As you will be aware it was not possible for us to hold our AGM meeting on 17 March. However, all the basic work for the AGM had been completed and the necessary papers had been sent out to members. An actual AGM meeting is required in our Constitution and so we were looking to a postponement. However, the Charity Commission has now revised its requirement with regard to AGMs and we are encouraged to utilise new methods of communication as we see fit in the light of Covid-19. So, in order to complete all aspects of our 2020 AGM we are hoping shortly to organise a virtual AGM meeting by email and post to cover all members and gain agreements which will allow us to continue. There were a number of items on the agenda for that meeting to put to members, not least an announcement of three new members for your committee. Details of this new adventure will shortly be sent to you.

Following that we are hoping to hold a virtual Committee meeting to examine all aspects of our activities, building in wherever we can the flexibility which is likely to be needed, learning along the way, to coin a phrase, that prophecy is very difficult and prophesying the future is even more difficult!

David Sewart

Members' Contributions

Scam Emails

These are some notes about scam emails that I have accrued from years of experience (of receiving - not sending - such emails) which I hope you will find useful.

As far as I am aware it is safe to open any email. However, it is not safe to open just any attachment or follow any unsolicited link.

If an email looks too good to be true, then the chances are it is too good to be true. Several of the scams are trying to exploit the desire for gaining money without doing any work. If someone is offering a grant or a tax refund that you know is not warranted, the email is probably trying to elicit your bank details. I know I don't have a relative in Nigeria who is going to leave me a million dollars!

If an email looks suspicious, then it probably is. Don't be fooled by the email coming from somebody you know. It is not unknown for address books to be hacked and then spurious emails are sent out to everybody in the address book. These often have scant detail except from the email address and also contain a link. If the suspicious email comes from somebody you know, contact them (phone, text, email) to check that they intended to send the email.

You often receive emails purporting to come from a bank threatening to close or suspend your account. If it is not from your own bank, it is easy to be dismissive but have a look at the text of the email (but don't follow any link or open any attachment) before you delete it. The reason for doing this is because when you get an email from your own bank it somehow looks altogether more genuine. If you have looked at the other bank emails, you will realise that this is just the same and the scammers have got round to sending you an email from your particular bank. Delete it.

If you feel you must contact an institution as a result of an email, do not follow a link in an email to achieve this contact. Go into your browser and find the institution (through Google or however you normally access the site) and then sign in as usual.

I find the most common method of identifying a scam email is to look at the sending address. If it has nothing to do with the supposed sender, that is an indication something is amiss, for example, a business email from an American university. Also look out for misspelt addresses, for example, emails for amazn and amzon.

Finally, junk filters are supposed to be using artificial intelligence software. (I'm not convinced.) Whatever the software, it needs to be trained. If you have an annoying sender who sends regular emails you don't want, move them to your junk folder rather than just deleting them. In the end, the software should learn to put them in the junk as they arrive.

Derek Gatenby

A couple more poems from **Ian Beverley**.

Subject: Pandemic Pointers

Our airports stand in semi-function
Only a drizzle of folk pass through,
Lines of Boeings and Airbuses
Fill spaces in shades of red, white and blue.

High streets have been hibernated,
No cafes, shops or pubs,
We wait to spend our money –
Revive our social clubs.

Schools, colleges are crippled,
Distance learning only there,
Bored youngsters lacking friendships,
Parents struggle giving care.

Light at the end of tunnel?
We live in hope and prayer,
Regain our love of living
It's not too late -so there!

Latent Musings

A weekend in the Cotswolds
A picnic in the Lakes,
A day trip to Llandudno –
Ask too much for goodness sake?

No pleasure boats on Windermere,
No B&B's in Broadway,
The piers are closed at seaside,
Tea or coffee just on take-away.

Simple pleasures we took for granted,
Would be luxurious now,
Perhaps when this is over,
We'll appreciate the here and how.

We'll learn to count our blessings,
For stores there seven days,
For restaurants choice of menu,
And pubs - a glass to raise!

Pictures from our Perambulations



These five sites all have something in common. What is it? The buildings have been modified and modernised over the years. The fifth building is there no more. The answer is on page 8.

Three Milestones

		
<p>From London 175 Miles From Macclesfield 8 Miles To Stockport 4 Miles</p>	<p>From London 174 Miles From Macclesfield 7 Miles To Stockport 5 Miles</p>	<p>From London 173 Miles From Macclesfield 6 Miles To Stockport 6 Miles</p>
<p>The central milestone, as you can probably guess, is the newly refurbished one outside Aldi. Arithmetic says that the one on the left is 1 mile north of the one outside Aldi and the one on the right is 1 mile south. The one on the left is disappearing behind the foliage on the wall beside London Road North about 100m north of the Anglesey Drive junction. The one on the right is seemingly leaning against the fence on the road to Macclesfield opposite the entrance to the Adlington Industrial Estate. I had driven past it loads of times without noticing it.</p> <p>All three were erected about 1824 and are Grade II listed structures.</p>		

The Problem with Calendars – Part 2 - How we got AD

The Julian calendar was used by early Christians to identify the beginning of the year and also the Easter Festival. Years were still counted from the foundation of the city of Rome (AUC). The Christian year began after the birth of Jesus. But what year was that? Nobody could be sure. The New Testament offers only approximations. The highlight of the year is, of course, Easter. The death and particularly the resurrection of Christ is the base on which Christianity is built. Without the “risen Christ” there would be no Christianity. But when was that?

The early Christian church developed a range of different practices for calculating New Year and Easter. Easter was related to the time of the Jewish Passover and the Passover was derived from astrological observations and so was not fixed to a standard date in the Julian calendar. It was the movable feast. The Emperor Constantine had called the Council of Nicaea (325 AD) to try to resolve some of these differences but, while the Nicene Creed has

stood the passage of time and is used today, its other agreed statements turned out to be honoured more in the breach than the observance. Within the next hundred years the Roman Empire and the order it had maintained would come to an end. Britain was abandoned in 410 AD and Rome itself was sacked by the Visigoths in the same year.

As the Roman Empire disintegrated so did the Calendar and the timing of Easter became very confused. In an attempt to restore the most important dates of the Christian calendar Pope John 1 asked an abbot, Dionysius Exiguus, to recalculate Easter. He did so and published a list of dates for Easter for the next 95 years with a new set of rules which explained his calculations. But at the same time – and perhaps more importantly, as far as the world today is concerned - Dionysius invented the Christian Era which he announced began on 1st January of the year following the birth of Christ (1AD). And he called it *Anno Domini* (in the year of Our Lord). All this was published as an edict in 531 AD.

Where Dionysius got his date for Christ's birth when he wrote his rules for calculating the next 95 years of Easter (532 627 AD) is not known. But we can now be certain that he was wrong. Mathew and Luke refer to it as being in the reign of King Herod and we can be certain that Herod died in 4BC. A date between 7 BC and 4 BC is nowadays widely accepted for the birth of Christ and recently accepted by the Catholic Church.

When the 95 years specified by Dionysius for Easter ran out, different calculations were made locally. The Church in Rome broke off from its allegiance to Constantinople and the politics of the West became seriously affected by the rise of Islam towards the end of the 7th century. Chaos in calendars reigned once again.

Although by 1100 the Catholic Church had made considerable progress in bringing various sects of Christianity into line, there were still significant problems. Some areas celebrated New Year's Day on Christmas Day. Julius Caesar's 1st of January still had the most support but others started on Good Friday. Britain used 25th March for the start of the year and continued to do so until the Gregorian Calendar was accepted in 1732.

Numerous appeals were made to the Catholic Church to bring the wide range of principal dates, including Saints' days, into line. And it seemed in 1345 that Pope Clement VI might accomplish this for 1349. But by 1347 the Black Death was moving along the Silk Road from Asia to the Crimea and then probably travelling on Genoese ships into the Mediterranean. This pneumonic plague was probably carried by fleas. It is estimated to have killed between 30% and 60% of Europe's population (far above the present Covid-19 virus). Plague raged for almost a decade.

David Sewart

Things to Do

Sudoku No 8

		4						
1			2			8	7	
			6	1		5		
4			7		3	1	5	
			8	5		3		
6				2				
	2		5	7				
	8			4			3	
		5						

Fill the grid so that each row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9

Below is the solution to No 7

1	4	5	6	8	2	3	9	7
8	9	6	7	4	3	5	2	1
7	3	2	5	9	1	8	6	4
6	8	3	4	2	5	7	1	9
5	7	4	8	1	9	6	3	2
2	1	9	3	6	7	4	8	5
4	2	8	1	5	6	9	7	3
9	5	7	2	3	8	1	4	6
3	6	1	9	7	4	2	5	8

More quiz questions from Hooha.

1. What is the connection between Croydon and Saffron Walden?
2. When did Higher Poynton Station close?
3. What is the parentage of a mule?
4. Name the former National Security Adviser to President Donald Trump who has written a book about Trump called The Room Where it Happened – a White House Memoir
5. What is measured by The Scoville scale?

Answers to the quiz in the previous edition

1. Who were the grandmothers of King Henry VIII?
Margaret Beaufort, heiress to the house of Lancaster and Elizabeth Woodville, Queen and widow of King Edward IV
2. Name the breed of black horses used in the Lloyds Bank Advertisements.
Friesian
3. Who designed the Spitfire aircraft?
R J Mitchell chief designer at Supermarine Aircraft Works, a subsidiary of Vickers Armstrong
4. Name the square building which was built during the reign of William the Conqueror and formed the original part of the Tower of London.
The White Tower

5. Jeff Lynne and Bob Dylan are the two survivors of the five members of which group, formed in 1988?

The Travelling Wilburys, which comprised George Harrison, Jeff Lynne, Roy Orbison, Bob Dylan and Tom Petty

Internet Culture

The National Theatre

Reportedly these are the last five of the National Theatre productions to be broadcast for free.

Finishing at 7pm on June 25th - Small Island - The epic stage version of Andrea Levy's prize-winning novel, directed by Rufus Norris, streaming to mark Windrush Day 2020.

Starting at 7pm on June 25th - A Midsummer Night's Dream - Gwendoline Christie plays Titania in the Bridge Theatre's immersive production directed by Nicholas Hytner.

Starting at 7pm on July 2nd - Les Blancs - An African country teeters on the edge of civil war in Lorraine Hansberry's epic, directed by Yaël Farber.

Starting at 7pm on July 9th - The Deep Blue Sea - Helen McCrory plays one of contemporary drama's greatest female roles in Terence Rattigan's masterpiece, directed by Carrie Cracknell.

Starting at 7pm on July 16th - Amadeus - Lucian Msamati is Salieri in Peter Shaffer's iconic play, directed by Michael Longhurst and featuring live orchestral accompaniment by Southbank Sinfonia.

Pictures from our Perambulations

These are the sites of the five lodges which marked the edges of Sir George Warren's estate. They are

Top left – Park Lodge

Top right – South Lodge

Middle left – North Lodge

Middle Right – German Lodge

Bottom left – Cawley Lodge

The five lodges are mentioned in various documents describing Sir George Warren's estate. The first three lodges were built at points where the main roads (turnpikes) crossed the boundaries of his lands. (Without any historical reference, it is confusing that South Lodge is to the north of Poynton town centre.) Cawley Lodge is marked on the 1907 map of Poynton East and its location can still be found because the paths still exist. However, the only thing there now are two small group of trees where the buildings stood with some bricks and stones on the ground under the trees. Clive Hill believes that Cawley is a local name.

Keeping in Touch

If you know of any U3A member who is feeling isolated and not on email, please contact them to let them know that they can phone Jayne or Sandra to be added to our telephone list.

Town Council Information

The Town Council website has lots of information on its website - www.poyntontowncouncil.gov.uk and on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/poyntontowncouncil/>

The list of local businesses who are able to deliver provisions, take-away meals and food to residents is still being updated by the Town Council and can be viewed or downloaded as a PDF at <https://bit.ly/2J8OWxL>.

Next Edition

Remember, if you would like the newsletter to have other content apart from my ramblings (literally and figuratively), send your contributions to news@poyntonu3a.org.uk. Also, if you disagree with any of my historical interpretations or have anything to add, please get in touch.

Ed