



Editorial

Welcome to the fourteenth edition of the electronic newsletters. As usual, member contributions are welcomed. If you would like to contribute to the next edition, send your text and pictures to news@poyntonu3a.org.uk.

Poynton U3A Update

All our U3A Committee were able to meet together through Zoom a few days ago. It was good to be able to see people again, some for the first time in several months. As the weeks roll by it becomes clearer that it will be a long time until we will have again the same freedom to act which allowed the creation of our organization a decade ago. However – and most importantly – there remains a continuing desire to plan for such a time. We have defined a range of aspects which need consideration and we hope to meet again to bring these together in November.

David Sewart

And here are a couple of items from groups that have re-started.

Walking Group - October

Thursday morning 1st October and the weather looked good. It had rained a bit over the past few days but not sufficient to disrupt this month's walk that we (Sandra and I) had agreed to lead. We had tried it out one last time the previous Sunday without any problems so at 9:30am we set off to meet the rest of the intrepid trekkers at the Coppice



Nature Reserve car park. All twenty who were expected turned up, so at 10:00am, after Marilyn summarised Covid-19 requirements, we were all ready to start.

The first section of the walk was a steady descent through woodland sometimes with the path sloping gently sideways so I was hoping that it was not too slippery. Fortunately, everything was ok and no one had any problems. The next section was a steady but shallow incline up to the

edge of Lyme park. Whilst the slope was gentle there was a bit of heavy breathing by the time we reached the top of the slope just inside Lyme Park. From there onwards the route was at worst undulating ending up with a gentle descent.

Sandra set off with the rest of the group in hot pursuit across several green fields and over a few stiles including some ladder stiles. Fortunately, some farm gates left open close to the stiles reduced the effort required. On the previous Sunday there had been a very large herd of cows right across the last field that we needed to cross so, although I am not specially unnerved by cows, I felt a real sense of relief when I saw that, on this occasion, they were all on the far side of the field. The weather remained good and we were surrounded by impressive views so, provided we took care to avoid numerous cow pats, the stroll was very enjoyable and we did not get our feet very wet or muddy. I had been taking up the rear to ensure that nobody lost the group or to help if anyone encountered any difficulties – no one did.



Having enjoyed the open countryside for a couple of miles, we turned left and descended through some woodland towards the canal at which point Sandra offered the alternative of walking back along the canal bank or of going past some stables followed by the brickworks before returning to the car park along the Middlewood Way.

The consensus was to follow the canal and at this point Sandra and I swapped roles. I suppose she felt that by this stage there was little possibility of me taking the wrong route. It started to rain lightly but, at this late stage in the walk, it was not important and we did not get very wet anyway. Finally, at Higher Poynton we dropped down onto the Middlewood Way and completed the walk back to the cars about 2.5 hours after the start with 5 miles behind us. Another pleasant walk completed.

Keith Batchelor

Photographic Group

During the pandemic we have been continuing our monthly meetings on Zoom. We also go out on 'field trips' following Government Guidelines of groups of six. During the summer we have had trips to local places of interest including Jackson's Brickworks to photograph whatever catches our eye, bird life, pond life or wildflowers. Another trip took us to Happy Valley in Hazel Grove to observe and photograph moving water. In September a number of the group visited Castleton in Derbyshire to see what caught their eye. A few ventured inside one of the caves on a guided tour. This tied in with the monthly theme of taking photographs in low light conditions. At the October meeting we also reviewed the quarterly project photographs that members submitted, the subject being 'Stylish and Elegant'.

Here are a few examples of photographs that members sent illustrating their interpretation of either 'low light conditions' (upper row) or 'stylish and elegant' (lower row).



Kate Marsham

Members' Contributions

Dragonflies

A warm calm sunny afternoon at the end of August, perfect weather for spotting dragonflies and an easily recognisable 'southern hawker' with a colourful blue and green body flies around the garden pond then away. Maybe it's the same one I see a few days later. It comes to rest briefly on the pink flowers of a spirea, next to where I am sitting, on the patio. No noise of lawn mowers, traffic, planes taking off or children playing to drown out the sound of the whirring of its wings as it flies off.

My nature notes remind that last year, at the beginning of September, I walked along the canal path from Bollington to the Miners Arms. Near bridge 21, I spotted a 'banded demoiselle damselfly'. This charmingly named damselfly has a large black spot on each of its' four wings so its identity cannot be mistaken. Damselflies are smaller and daintier than dragonflies. I repeat the walk on 9th September hoping to see one again and I do, on exactly the same stretch of the canal.

15th September is another warm sunny day and we catch the bus to Middlewood. Then it's a short walk to Jackson's Brickworks where there are several ponds. We add other species to our list of dragonflies seen including 'common darters' (males red, females brown). There are pairs mating on the wing. Our binoculars, usually used for bird watching, are focused on a tiny pale blue damselfly amongst the reeds on the far side of a pond. It's definitely not on our identification chart!



Walking along the path which joins the Middlewood Way we see two white Scottie dogs in front of us. They are jumping about, very excited. "It's a dragonfly" I exclaim and to the dogs "Leave, leave!"

The owner calls the dogs off and grabs their collars but their eyes remain fixed on their new plaything. I can see the 'brown hawker' on the path has a tiny soft white birds feather caught in its wing, preventing it from flying. I bend

down and encourage it onto my finger. While Richard carefully removes the feather it nips my finger, reminding me this is a voracious predator of smaller insects. Free again it takes off, apparently unharmed and none the worse for its adventure. As sunlight catches its veined wings they look like golden lace. For me this was a magical moment. Once again, in these uncertain times, I have experienced the beauty and restorative power of nature.

Vivienne Arnold

Mud on Your Face

The first time I heard the phrase “Mud Kitchen” I had no idea what it meant. I did understand both words but not in association with each other. My first-born daughter used the phrase along with other phrases like children’s birthdays, use up those bits of wood that are lying about in your workshop, and give you something to do. Not going out, not seeing anyone except supermarket delivery people, disinfecting said delivery and as much of the world as I could reach from my own garden, was occupying me enough, although I was deemed to need something to do.

So, I resorted to Google, as always, for information. Apparently, I needed two pallets; that was not going to happen. It seemed I could purchase a complete Mud Kitchen at great expense; that also was not going to happen. Trays were needed for mixing mud, and a water source for the same purpose. All were available from various sites; it was obvious to me that I was ignorant of the joys of Mud Kitchens.

None the less I plunged in and ordered trays and a water container with a tap; now armed with these items I could start to design a Mud Kitchen. The trays were made of very lightweight plastic so I thought they would need to be inserted into the structure or would be blowing round the garden or get knocked off, depositing mud around the work area. I felt the top and shelves needed to be slatted to allow water and rain to pass through, because sometimes this part of England has been known to occasionally be blessed by the odd rain shower.



Having measured the items and the children, and a rough measure of available timber, I could give some serious thought to design, structure and transportation. My next mission was to trawl through my odd assortment of miscellaneous timber, off-cuts, unused pieces, used lengths, and to select pieces to cut to the required sizes. Taking a lead from Ikea, and being restricted by the size of my car, I went for partial construction, and partial flat pack, without the pack. This comprised of four

components, the basic frame, plus top work area, middle shelf and the legs at the back to support cross-rails and water container holder.

A couple of weeks later, having loaded it into the car the only way it differed from an Ikea product was that all the components and fixings were there and complete.

My effort and work were all well rewarded and, when arriving at its destination, it was met by two very excited grandchildren. The four-year old especially was dithering with anticipation trying to help with cries of “Where does this go Poppa?” The three of us had to

clear the area of loose stones first, so armed with shovels we set to digging and scraping down to concrete flags, which was a better base than pebbles. Then we could assemble the pieces I had made. Soon all was together, water container filled and both children scrabbling for soil to make mud. We were served with mud cakes and mud cocktails with leaves in place of small umbrellas.

Moving on a few weeks after the installation of their new kitchen the children are now utilizing their picnic table for serving pies, ice creams, cakes and drinks to passing imaginary customers. Because they are serving members of the public, they decided to wear aprons, which are real, and masks which are, like the customers, totally imaginary. Children's imagination seems to have no bounds. All their fare has a mud theme, but still it would be great to call round again to be served by such attentive staff and sample their wares.

Every few weeks we have been managing to see some of our family throughout the summer in their garden or ours but we find this an unnatural way to have contact with grandchildren. We understand it, the children accept it, even so it is a loss to the children but a much greater loss to grandparents.



Clive B Hill

Unsocial Media

I'm Twittering not going to Tik Tok,
My Facebook's still untouched,
There's nothing wrong with my WhatsApp
Not used - like my Snapchat.

My Instagram is virginal,
My phone is lacking Apps,
I communicate by landline
It serves to fill the gaps.

I get my news from newsprint,
I walk down to the shop,
I buy my Daily each day
I'm not caught on the hop.

Should Bronco and Izal disappear
With other toilet tissues -
Try hanging Google on a nail -
That could show up some issues.

I know that I'm now 'out of sync',
Too old to change my ways,
My mind's still clear, thank goodness
But I'm past my better days.

Ian Beverley

My 2020 Scout's Pace

A few years ago, aged 62, I took up running for the first time in my life. I've always been reasonably fit - I've danced with Poynton Jemmers Women's Morris for 26 years - but I'd never tried running.

I started by doing the couch to 5k app. It wasn't easy, but I got there, and used to run the 5k parkrun on Saturdays. I progressed to doing a 10k run.

Over the next few years, I lost motivation and let the running slip.

During lockdown I found myself running some of the way to my local shop, but I found I would run until I was exhausted and had to walk the rest of the way. My daughter suggested "jeffing" - a popular method whereby you run and walk in fixed intervals. (We used to call this 'Scout's Pace' when I was a Girl Guide!) I tried it and found that I could run much further quite comfortably. I run for 60 seconds then walk for 30 seconds, then repeat. I can be exhausted after the run interval but, after 30 seconds walking, I'm restored and ready to run again. The strange thing is that I'm no slower than if I ran the whole way.

I can recommend this for anyone who is reasonably fit but thinks they can't run. My daughter and I have entered the Cheshire 10k later this month. Wish us luck!

Running/walking around Poynton Pool first thing in the morning is a bonus: a lovely setting as well as exercise. See you there!



Cecilia Storr-Best

There is enough space for a joke!

Now we are into October, I've put up a marquee in my garden with flashing lights and funky music.

Is this the winter of my disco tent?

The Last of Summer

Last week we went- it was really Autumn -
But the day spoke of "Summer" -
To the seaside. Where the warm breeze
Flapped the last rags of coloured flags
That had been set out to charm visitors.
Blue skies, but grey clouds gathered
Getting ready to rain at evening.
Ageing flowers drooped in desert-dry beds
And baskets, but no-one came to water them.
"Too late in the season, not worth it, nobody
Will come to holiday now." Only us elderly,
On cheap trips, crowded on hot coaches
Exchanging memories along the Prom
Of what our Steven did in '87,
"When 'e were a lad." We told tales
Of Old Uncle Bill, who "drank too much beer
And lost his good panama on the pier,
Straight into the sea when the wind blew."
"I wore me new dress, D'you remember,
Our Susan? Oh, I was a fashion plate."
We talked of sandcastles, sandals, deckchairs
Rolled-up trousers, and knotted hankies, kids
Sticks of rock, ice-cream, Punch and Judy
Landladies and High Tea, seagulls....
Laughing as the wind swirled the scraps
And wrappings round the litter bin.
And remember how Gran, God bless her,
Put on Richard's trunks, tied my scarf
Round her bust and said it was a bikini
And went for a dip. Oh, the memories,
Happy memories. Still fresh, though we,
And the year, are slowly fading.

Ruth Howard

Add Seasoning

Weather turning, daylight shorter,
Street lights burning ever sooner.
Dogs last walks even earlier
Days are greyer-Autumn looms.

Flowers shredding, leaves are turning
Winds from North, fingers nipping,
Time for warming, coats and gloves
Brisker walking, hats and scarves.

Bring on winter warmers early,
Thick soups and simple filling fare
Draw the curtains, light the fire-
Hot drink, soft slippers, settle down.

Night time brooding, darkness creeping,
Moonlight fitful, branches wheezing -
Pillows fluffing, duvets spreading
Peaceful dreams to end the day.

Ian Beverley

Things to Do

Sudoku No 14

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

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

Below is the solution to No 13

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

More quiz questions from Hooha.

1. Where is Perch Rock?
2. Who first coined the phrase Rock and Roll?
3. What is Ayers Rock now called?
4. Who, after her death, termed himself Princess Diana's rock?
5. Of what type of rock is the Old Man of Hoy in Orkney?

Answers to the quiz in the previous edition

1. What is the largest breed of domestic rabbit?
The Flemish Giant can reach up to 4ft3in long, originally bred for meat and fur but very docile and now often kept as a pet.
2. Which is the oldest known breed of dog?
The Saluki, which emerged in 329BC in Egypt, kept as a pet and mummified after death.
3. What type of sheep are extremely hardy, thrive and breed in this country in very bleak conditions?
Herdwick sheep live and forage in the Lake District and the hills and crags of northern England.
4. Where in England are bison being reintroduced?
In Kent bison are being bred to manage ancient woodland in Blean Woods, Kent.
5. Name Britain's only native breeding goose.
The Greylag

Corrections and Clarifications

[I've been waiting to do one of these for the last 13 issues! – Ed]

We had a geographical inexactitude in the last set of quiz answers. We had Maldon in Kent when it is actually in Essex. Thanks to Barbara Knight for pointing this out.

Town Council Information

The Town Council website has up-to-date information about Poynton on its website - www.poyntontowncouncil.gov.uk and on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/poyntontowncouncil/>