



# Poynton News

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

[poyntonu3a.org.uk](http://poyntonu3a.org.uk)

**Issue 33-5**

**18<sup>th</sup> Nov 2020**

## Editorial

Welcome to the fifteenth edition of the electronic newsletters. As before, member contributions are welcomed. If you would like to contribute to the next edition, send your text and pictures to [news@poyntonu3a.org.uk](mailto:news@poyntonu3a.org.uk).

## Poynton U3A Update

We have managed a further meeting of our Committee through Zoom and looked in some detail at a 2021 membership fee and when/how it might be collected. The last few months have brought about a revolution in standard payment systems. And our fee needs recalibrating as estimates of activities and costs in 2021 are having to be reduced in the likelihood of a reduced programme. A crystal ball might be of use in these circumstances but there are none in the shops at the moment. However, our Committee will have to decide finally on this and the renewal process at its meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> December and we expect to announce this in our next Newsletter. The very recent announcement of a possible national vaccination programme becoming available early next year is welcome indeed but adds, of course, another element to the equation.

**David Sewart**

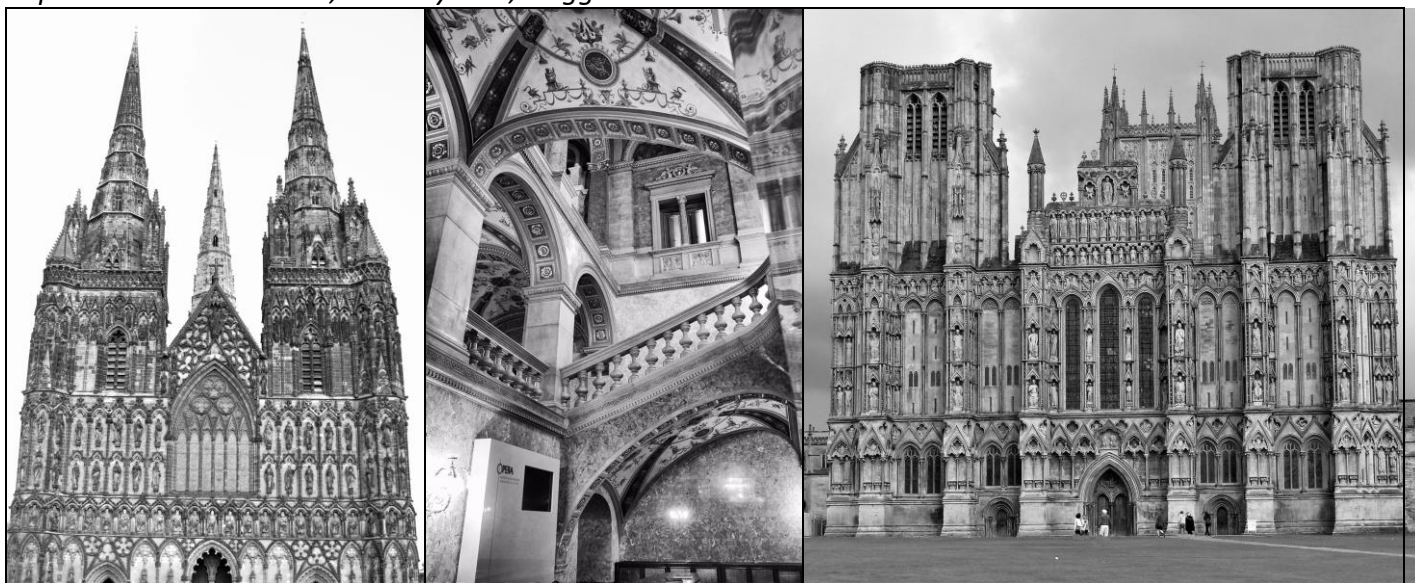
Your Committee	
David Sewart	Chairman
Kate Marsham	Vice-Chair
Jayne Barnes	Secretary
Sandra Batchelor	Treasurer & Groups Co-ordinator
Cecilia Storr-Best	Membership Secretary
Joyce Streets	Speaker Organiser & Publicity Co-ordinator
Janet Hughes	Speaker Organiser
Vera Williams	Welcomer & Asst Membership Secretary

## Photographic Group

Since our last Zoom meeting we have been taking photographs of interesting buildings either in black and white mode or converting colour photographs to black and white. From the comfort of our own homes we were taken to far flung places all over the world, from India to Bilbao, Budapest to Buxton and some beautiful photos of cathedrals in Norwich, Wells and Lincoln as well as locations nearer to home including Lyme Hall, Poynton, Bramhall and Quarry Bank Mill. Due to restrictions on travel this year some photographs had to be dug out of our archives from previous years!



*Top - St Michael's Mount, Aldi Poynton, Guggenheim Bilbao*



*Middle - Lichfield Cathedral, Opera House Budapest, Wells Cathedral*



*Bottom - Lyme Hall, Budapest Station*

One of our members, Lyn, prepared a very restful presentation entitled 'What a Wonderful World' set to music of the same name. The photographs were from her own collection and gave us lots of examples of things to be thankful for, family, friends, nature, travel, our countryside and music. It was very thought provoking in what is a very difficult time for many people.

Another member, Joyce, demonstrated the process of creating a triptych of photographs using Photoshop. Something for us all to try at home!

In our next meeting we will be reviewing our photographs of Autumnal scenes.

## A Fond Farewell

For many years John Jurics has been the leading light of our U3A photographic group. He stepped in to run the group a few years ago and has been our mentor, inspiration and friend. But the time has come for him and his wife to move to live nearer to their daughter. We will miss him and his expert advice and guidance. Thank you John for all your help with the group.

**Kate Marsham**

## **Members' Contributions**

### **Autumn Walk**

Heavy grey rain threatening clouds don't deter me from my planned afternoon walk along the canal path, starting from the bus stop at the Boar's Head. It's an atmospheric autumn afternoon, still and quiet, a slight chill in the air. I turn right along the path and, just past bridge 17, where I had stopped to pick blackberries at the end of summer, I hear blackbirds and redwing calling in the hedgerow. They are feasting on hawthorn berries. It is now the turn of the birds to take advantage of nature's harvest. Some birds move around in mixed flocks in autumn and winter. Goldfinches, sparrows and blue tits are communicating with each other.

One of our smaller birds of prey, a kestrel, passes me. It is obviously not in hunting mode as it is flying slowly and low along the canal, just above the water. It flies under the bridge and lands on a telegraph pole. This is proving to be a birdwatching hotspot. Two weeks



ago, I did the same walk with Richard and we saw a grey wagtail standing on a flat stone at the water's edge.

At Adlington Marina I leave the canal path and join the Middlewood Way. Walking back towards Coppice Wood I choose the higher path, where there are several memorial benches. I sit on one which is directly under a group of majestic oak trees. They provide a canopy of gold and brown leaves. A jay flies across, an acorn in its beak. Another follows.

*A watercolour of a Jay painted by Viv*

They are stashing acorns away for winter food. Nuthatches are equally busy, hiding acorns in crevices in the bark of the trunks of the oaks. They give themselves away with their distinct call 'kee, kee, kee'. Leaves flutter down and a robin bursts into song. Shafts of autumn sunshine break through the clouds and I enjoy the moment. I am reluctant to leave my seat.

But I carry on and pass a small plantation of Douglas firs bordering the path, their lower branches drooping like those on a Christmas tree. Droplets of rainwater cling to the needles and, as the sunlight catches them, they twinkle like tiny diamonds and sapphires-magical.

Turning into Coppice Wood the middle section of the main path has a row of silver birches on one side. Their delicate branches with yellow leaves overhang ferns which are referred to as bracken now their fronds have turned brown. Although I can't yet see the stream down in the valley, I can hear the water rushing down towards the bridge. Last month was the fifth wettest October on record.

When I reach the bottom of the wood, I see that Wardsend bridge is open after fifteen months of closure for repairs due to flood damage. Traffic is flowing both ways, it is busy. Once again this year, I reflect on how lucky I am that observing nature on my local patch allows me to escape, for an hour or two, from current worrying situations.

**Vivienne Arnold**

## The Fall

Autumn's not for sadness, enjoy its fleeting span,  
The dusty green of Summer's gone  
Replaced by handsome tan.  
The berried bushes flank the lanes  
And stare with scarlet eyes  
Deserting graceful birds take wing  
And fly the steel-blue skies.

Harvest fields are closely shorn,  
Bereft of golden grain,  
Dewy leaves descend and cling  
Like kisses in the rain.  
Misty dawns are chilly,  
But the tardy sun's benign  
The bracken's turning russet,  
The creeper's red as wine.

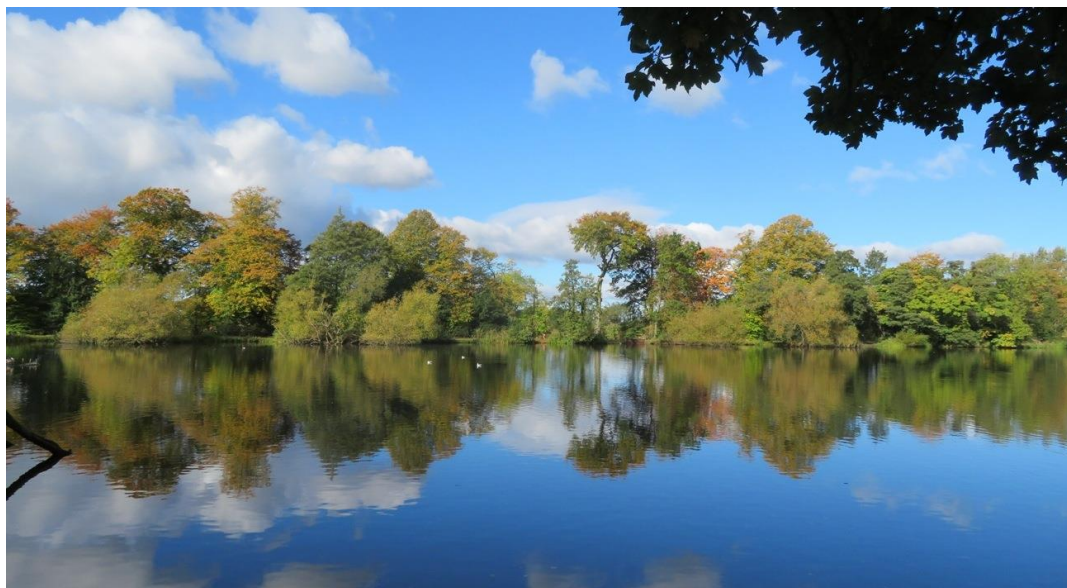
The sap is falling lower,  
And Winter grimly waits  
To give, at length, the order  
To frost the cooling slates

Autumn's a romantic,  
Recalling years ago  
Smothering wild moorland miles  
With drifts of early snow.  
Remembering the melodies,  
The haunting songs of youth,  
The ageless tang of wood-smoke,  
The bitter-sweet of truth.

The ageless days have joined the past,  
The past the seasons sever  
And Autumns fade, yet bloom again -  
For Autumns are for ever.

**Ian Beverley**

## Pictures from Our Perambulations



Social-distanced gulls. Our bird-book tells me these are black-headed gulls in winter plumage.



## Platitudes are us

Best foot forward; we'll all get through this together; nil desperandum; things can only get better; next slide please; this was recommended by the scientists on 21 September; all of which I feel could be closely followed by my thought for today of "Frankly, my dear, I don't give a damn". It almost seems as though the doom-laden news programmes at five, six, ten and rolling news channels and so on have given us such tunnel vision that we are often unaware of significant events happening around the world. Of course, the obvious exception to that statement is The Donald, whose bragging and threats to sue have crossed all our radar screens.

So many people with so many opinions, regional and national, general know-alls, who time has proved are know-nothings and so many mistakes have been compounded. Perhaps if everyone was put into solitary confinement that would cure something, even if it drove us all completely barmy or we could all go for "let's pretend it is not happening". When eventually some sort of normality returns hindsight will show us with absolute clarity what should and could have been done and when it should have happened.

Meanwhile will Father Christmas have to self-isolate or can he go on his merry way on his merry sleigh? Will it be safe to leave a carrot for Rudolph and the usual glass of whisky and mince pie for the man himself? So many children will no longer remember how things used to be, and so many adults feel that never again can life be lived as it was. So what to do? Are we able to pick out the good bits and ignore the worst aspects, if only for a time? So many kind and resourceful individuals have come to the fore in a totally unforeseen way, with amazing ideas to help in matters which could not have been imagined. People like Captain Tom, whose mantra is "Tomorrow will be a better day", have made the most amazing impression on so many people and on children in particular.

Many other folk have sorted, reorganised, sold off and managed to review their possessions and see with awful clarity how much unnecessary detritus has been held onto. In this house things which were once treasured and thought to be essential to life until last March are now, like Elvis, leaving the building, although it has taken months, and a few arguments, in some cases, to reach those decisions! People are putting items for sale on websites, or offering things free to anyone who is prepared to collect them, even leaving goods outside the gateway for anyone who fancies them and can make use of them. Dog-in-the-manger attitudes have morphed into "if this can be of use to somebody else, they are welcome to it". So, things are not all bad.

**Helen J Stanley**

## Pictures from Our Perambulations – Part 2



Above and Left  
Poynton in Yellow and Red

Below  
Yellow and Red in Poynton  
(A memory from earlier this year)



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## Human Communication – Part 1 of 3

All creatures communicate – touch, body language, pheromone scents, hearing etc. We hear sounds between 20 Hertz (one hertz equals one cycle per second) and 20,000 Hz which is about 10 octaves. Lots of creatures transmit above or below that so we never hear them. Whales can transmit from less than 30 Hz and up to 250,000 Hz (12 times as shrill as humans). We call that ultrasound which means above our range of hearing and of course there is infra sound which is below our range of hearing. Blue whales can transmit at 188 dB in infrasound which is detectable over hundreds of miles. Both sexes produce several types of single notes but only the males sing. When they sing, they dive deeper which means that the sound travels further. When they are migrating, they mostly sing in the daytime but when they are staying in one area they mostly sing at night. They actually “sing” throughout most of the year over periods of 8 continuous days. Why? No idea! By comparison a normal conversation is 65 dB, telephone 85, a pneumatic drill or hand drill 95 and here the sound begins to get dangerous for us if we are exposed to it for a long time. The loudest exposure without hearing protection that is possible for human beings is a jet engine which is 140 dB. The noise of 180 dB will instantly destroy our hearing tissues and almost certainly scramble our brains so that death will result. All mammals make sounds even if we can’t hear them.

On the morning of August 27, 1883 ranchers on a sheep camp outside Alice Springs, Australia, heard a sound like two shots from a rifle. At that very moment the Indonesian volcanic island of Krakatoa was blowing itself to bits 2233 miles away. Well – not quite “at that very moment”. It had all happened about 3 hours 15 minutes earlier and the sound had taken all that time to get from Indonesia to Australia. Scientists think this is probably the loudest sound humans have ever actually measured. Not only are there records of people hearing the sound of Krakatoa thousands of miles away; there is also physical evidence that the sound of the volcano’s explosion travelled all the way around the globe multiple times. Nobody heard Krakatoa in England or Toronto. There wasn’t a “boom” audible in St Petersburg. Instead what those places recorded were spikes in atmospheric pressure – the very air tensing up and then releasing with a sigh as the waves of sound from Krakatoa passed through. There are two important lessons about sound here. The first is that you don’t have to be able to see the loudest thing in the world in order to hear it. The second is that just because you can’t hear a sound doesn’t mean it isn’t there. It’s just that it’s outside human range. Sound is powerful and pervasive and it surrounds us all the time whether we are aware of it or not.

Speaking requires coordinated control over our lips, tongue and exhalation (breathing out). And of course, you are breathing in air at the same time to fill your lungs so that the air can be pushed out through your vocal cords in the form of sound. No other animal can do this. How do we do it? Well we have 33 vertebrae in our spines altogether – 24 of them are articulating (can move). We have 7 cervical vertebrae, 12 thoracic vertebrae and 5 lumbar vertebrae and 9 at the bottom which are fused. In comparison dinosaurs had up to 75

vertebrae from neck to tail over a matter of 30 m. Each of our vertebrae has a hole in it = vertebral foramen ( Latin *forare* = to bore, *fores* = doors). through which the spinal column of nerves passes. In the earliest type of humans there was only a small hole and this is the case with all the nonhuman primates. There was not enough space for the nerves which control breathing and sound production at the same time. Early humans also had a larynx (voice box) with vocal chords like human infants. But infants are anatomically incapable of most human **sounds** until the larynx has dropped into the throat (at one year plus) from C2/C3 to C3/C6. The larynx of apes never drops. Our larynx is between C3 and C6 of our seven cervical vertebrae, the small bones which allow us to move heads up and down and side to side.

**David Sewart**

## **Bookworm**

There is no insect called a bookworm; bookworm usually refers to a voracious reader. The first thing I thought when discovering a hole in Benét's Readers Encyclopaedia was a bookworm. Holes and tunnels in books are often made by termites but not in North West England. The most likely cause here is woodworm or maybe some other sort of chewing grub. Starting as a hole on page 805 it developed into a tunnel and continued for two hundred pages until returning to being simply a hole. On page 805 the hole was next to the word Innocent II, in a list of Popes, on page 1005 the hole finished at the word three. I can't think of anything significant about the word three other than it can only be divided by itself and one, also it lies next to two and four and is odd. Pythagoras referred to three as the perfect number but you know what philosophers are like.

Whether there is any significance as to where the grub, worm or whatever chose to chew I don't know. Although is it a coincidence that Innocent II was one of the Ambassadors who drafted the Concordat of Worms, an agreement in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, which ended disputes between the Pope and the Holy Roman Emperor, Henry V, over the right of investiture.

This particular book was bought by my wife years ago, no doubt in a charity shop, for reference purposes, so we have no idea if the damage is historic or occurred in its new home, our home; I prefer to think it's historic. Obviously, the grub gained more from the book than we did or we would have discovered the labyrinths sooner. The book now is on a new adventure with the help of the Local Authority recycling policy. If any grubs are still there, they will have no end of chewable material to keep them content.

**Clive B Hill**

## Things to Do

Sudoku No 15

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

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

Below is the solution to No 14

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

More quiz questions from Hooaha.

1. What did Leo Baekland invent in 1907?
2. In Pride and Prejudice what is Mr Darcy's Christian name?
3. How was Farrokh Bulsara better known?
4. Goldeneye was the original name of whose estate in Jamaica?
5. Who was the tallest English monarch?

Answers to the quiz in the previous edition

1. Where is Perch Rock?  
*Perch Rock Lighthouse is at New Brighton, just beyond Fort Perch Rock, at the mouth of the River Mersey.*
2. Who first coined the phrase Rock and Roll?  
*Disc jockey Alan Freed in 1951*
3. What is Ayers Rock now called?  
*Now officially gazetted as Uluru / Ayers Rock*
4. Who, after her death, termed himself Princess Diana's rock?  
*Her former butler Paul Burrell*
5. Of what type of rock is the Old Man of Hoy in Orkney?  
*Old Red Sandstone, at 137 feet believed to be Britain's tallest sea stack*

## East Cheshire Hospice Quiz

A few days ago, you should have received a quiz from East Cheshire Hospice. The quiz was intended to be sold in the ECHO shop but the change in restrictions prevented this happening. If you didn't receive a copy and would like one, please reply to the email which brought you the newsletter.

## Town Council Information

The Town Council website has up-to-date information about Poynton on its website -

[www.poyntontowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.poyntontowncouncil.gov.uk) and on Facebook at

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