

Poynton u3a News

poyntonu3a.org.uk

Issue 35-2

14th May 2021

Editorial

Welcome to the twenty-first edition of these electronic newsletters.

There is a new crossword in this issue with the solution for the previous one. Hopefully this will be a regular feature. To add to the content, send your contribution to news@poyntonu3a.org.uk.

Poynton u3a Update

Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Although now there are reasonable expectations of a less circumscribed social atmosphere in the not-too-distant future, we are still bound by the limits of social distancing and public gatherings. And so the AGM papers which you have been sent recently are for an AGM which follows the same process as that of last year. The good news is that, not least through the success which vaccinations have demonstrated, we think that we might now at last and with some growing confidence look to reopening our programme, albeit gradually, for the autumn.

We are encouraged in this not least by the fact that our membership this year is now over 400 which clearly demonstrates that there is a strong continuing interest in our u3a in Poynton.

David Stewart

Walking Group

The walking group recently had its first walk since lockdown last year. There were seventeen of us including a new member and another walking with us for the first time. Hopefully they will come again! Although quite chilly to start with the sun shone enough to warm us up.

We went on a circular walk around Marple Bridge led by Peter Marsham. This was approximately 5 miles starting from the car park near Marple station.

Following the River Goyt, we stopped for ten minutes at the remains of Mellor Mill. This is the site of the largest spinning mill in the world in its hey-day. It was owned by Samuel Oldknow. Little remains of the once six-storey site, but parts have been preserved and

information boards describe the various sections visible. The mill was destroyed by fire in 1892. We continued along the rough road passing Bottoms Hall and the Roman Lakes to walk under the towering viaduct. This is a charming section of the Goyt River which at this time of year is alive with bird song, wild flowers and blossom on the trees. Crossing the railway near Strines station, we continued past a large lake in the middle of which was a dovecote. After crossing the Strines Road we headed up to the Peak Forest Canal turning right along the towpath towards Marple, passing the top section of Marple Locks and heading back to the car park at Marple Bridge.



Text by **Kate Marsham**, photographs from **Sandra and Keith Batchelor**

Photography Group

Our photo topic this month was distant landscapes and we had some fantastic photos from the Peak District and local areas.

Peter talked about Exploring Elements of Composition and discussed the Rule of Thirds, Golden Ratio, Phi Grid and Golden Triangle. Peter showed us examples of cropped photos including some of his own that had the grid, rule or ratio applied.

Janet talked about her passion for photographing geese and birds grooming, stretching and splashing and showed some of her photos.

Here are some examples from the photo topic.



Easter Charity Fundraiser

Following on from her fundraising efforts previously for Children In Need and The Children's Society, one of our members, Liz Arrowsmith, has done a brilliant job raising £583.50 for East Cheshire Hospice over Easter. She, along with friends, knitted chicks and bunnies filled with a chocolate egg. Her husband constructed a cabinet in which she displayed them. It was placed outside their house along with a donation box.

Congratulations Liz on a wonderful effort!

Kate Marsham



The Medicine Packet Recycling Programme

Thank you for supporting our medicine packet recycling efforts. Some of you have already started collecting from your own household and those of your neighbours. Poynton u3a committee members will act as a collection point and then take them to one of the participating pharmacies who will then forward them on to Terracycle. This includes any brand of EMPTY medicine blister packets.

Waste that is NOT accepted:

- Any form of unused, unopened and out-of-date medicine, including tablets, pills, lozenges and caplets as medicine should be returned to a pharmacy for safe disposal
- Cardboard packaging as this can be recycled through your local council facilities
- Any other medicine containers such as bottles, inhalers or sprays

For more information about this and what happens to the empty packages please see:

[The Medicine Packet Recycling Programme - TerraCycle](#)



Next Steps:

- Keep collecting.
- Let Jayne know when you have some to send in, maybe a carrier bagful, at enquiries@poyntonu3a.org.uk and we will arrange for you to either drop them off (details to be arranged) or to be picked up – we will normally do this as part of our daily walks.
- We will take them to a registered collection point.

Jayne Barnes

Members' Contributions

Wildlife Week

An April morning and as Richard opened the kitchen door he was greeted by a shower of 'white stuff', not snowflakes, but tiny white polystyrene beads. Mystified he looked up and noticed a narrow crack in the cement where the overflow pipe was embedded. He saw a blue tit squeeze into the hole, and fly off with a tiny ball of beads in its beak. Over the next few days, the pair of blue tits must have industriously removed enough cavity insulation to prepare a nest chamber! Making use of the nest box on the garden fence would surely have been an easier option.

It is not unusual to see foxes in Poynton gardens, and this one was sitting by the pond at 8.30am, warming itself in the sunshine after a frosty night. I grabbed my camera and tried to open the door quietly, impossible, and the 'click' alerted it. Mr Fox disappeared behind the shed.

Richard's first garden job, when we moved into this new build house forty-three years ago, was to instal a pond to attract wildlife. Over the years it has been used by frogs, newts, dragonflies and damselflies and other insects, water lilies and fish. Birds use it for drinking and bathing and blackbirds collect mud from the edges to line their nests.

They have all given us great pleasure, but a visit from a heron is a mixed blessing. On 12th April, at 7.30pm a heron was standing in the pond. Knee deep in water it was eyeing up the goldfish. Richard shooed it off and it landed on a neighbour's roof, but must have returned later in the evening because by the next morning there were two, not four fish in the pond. It is very likely the heron will remember and return.



Colour pencil sketch of heron by Viv

Blink and you miss it, a sparrow hawk, a fast-flying raptor which we sometimes see, skimming at low level under the washing line, in search of small prey, causing all small birds to scatter in fear of their lives. The sparrow hawk in our garden on 13th April, was enjoying a substantial meal. Sat in the middle of the lawn, its talons gripped a wood pigeon which it was tearing apart, all the while 'mantling' its prey. It left feathers strewn across the lawn. We left them there, guessing they would be made use of. The next two days, at precisely 6pm, sparrows descended onto the lawn. They hopped around joyfully, selecting the soft white feathers, as many as five at a time. Beaks overfull, they dropped feathers which they then tried to retrieve before the breeze blew them away. Then off they flew in all directions, back to their nests, to add a touch of 'luxury'. Bemused is not an adjective I would normally use to describe a bird's expression, but that is exactly how they looked when they returned the third day to find the feathers all gone.

With early bumble bees enjoying nectar found in spring flowers such as snakes head fritillary and pulmonaria, a surprisingly large number of ladybirds, and a badger walking along the road in the middle of the night, this has been quite a week of wildlife.

Viv and Richard Arnold

Lockdown Birthday

Celebrating the second of my birthdays during lockdown I enjoyed a lazy day, lots of cards, calls and outdoor visits from friends but no presents from either of my daughters, however we had been invited on the following Saturday to our elder daughter's house for a Chinese takeaway meal, with grandchildren plus younger daughter, for a garden-based bash.

Lovely to be there together and I knew something was afoot although had no clue as to what that might be. I was not prepared suddenly to see Katherine leading a donkey down the three steps from the terrace to the lower lawned area, followed by a girl leading a very small Shetland pony and another with a barn owl on her gauntleted arm. Wow and more wow!! In her work with vulnerable people Katherine has often hired the teams from animal sanctuaries to bring animals or birds for their great therapeutic benefit to her clients, both young and old, but this special day was therapy for her animal-loving mother instead.

The wee donkey, for aficionados of Line of Duty, was called Jesus and was delightfully biddable, although at times he was leading a child on the other end of the leading rein towards the particular patches of grass he had spotted, rather than being led.

Delilah was the Shetland pony, consuming as much grass as she possibly could do, wearing little suede shoes, with Velcro fastenings, over her front hooves to protect her sensitive feet when she had walked over the rough chippings to get to the steps. Both horse and donkey were treated to multiple Polo mints - strawberries and donkeys etc!

The owl, Willow, stared unblinkingly with huge black eyes in her fluffy cat-like face before twisting her head in a manner some of us with permanently stiff necks and very limited rotation could only envy.

Jesus and Delilah received a number of sessions of intense grooming and enough surplus winter coat was brushed out to stuff a cushion, and as it blew round the garden to be a big help to any birds in the process of nest building. Both animals were ridden bareback by the children. At last, it was time to walk them back to their horsebox which was parked on the road and to wave them all off on their merry way.

A lovely birthday present from my family, an amazing and splendid surprise and, as our 4 year old grandson told his mother, it had been the best day EVER.

(Thinking about it all later I have to admit that despite loving animals, holding and petting, talking to them and waiting for the answers and return smiles from them which never come, in the back of my mind was a feeling of great relief that the day to day responsibility of caring for them was somebody else's problem.)

Helen J Stanley

Footloose and Fancy-Free

Many of us have been doing a lot of walking over the past year or so.

Not that we really wanted to, perhaps, but because the government had put its foot down and told us we must toe the line and go out only for exercise and essentials.

So out came the walking boots; off we went on little-trodden footpaths and down lonely lanes. Through miles of mud and mire we trod, arriving home weary and footsore, declaring "Never again!" until sheer boredom and weight gain shamed us into going out again.

The exercise was good for us, but maybe not the toffees we consumed along the way. We were careful though, to leave only our footprints behind, and not to trample underfoot the little growing things which eventually turned into bright celandines, perfumed bluebells and shy wood-anemones.

It was pleasant to call out a distanced greeting, being careful, on narrow paths, not to tread on someone's toes but to step aside to let them pass.

Sometimes the way became steep and I needed a leg up or encouragement from my partner to put my best foot forward.

Still, darker days came, cold, rain and snow, but when we could, garbed top to toe in woolly hats and waterproofs, off we went, through heaps of old leaves and fallen branches.

New Year came; but there was no First Footing this year.

Footprints we made in new-fallen snow, treated our boots to a coat of Dubbin to keep them waterproof and off we set again. We saw the early crocus, the daffodils, the bluebells again; lovely, though now they were familiar friends.

Talk of holidays began; we longed to be able to travel to the sea-side to walk along a beach; for someone else to cook dinner. We wanted to go dancing.

Hedges greened, lawns began to be mown; still we walked, but at least now we could go with our small family outdoors, provided we did not over-step the mark.

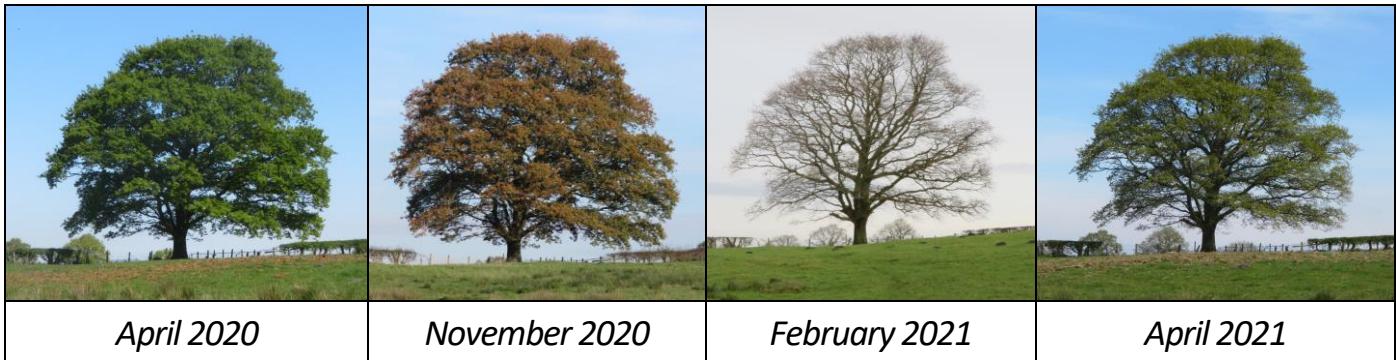
Now we are vaccinated, but longing for freedom before we turn up our toes and are carried out feet foremost.

Yes, we long to be footloose and fancy-free again.

Ruth Howard

Pictures from Our Perambulations

This is a personal *homage* to the fact that we have been having “Pictures from Our Perambulations” for just over a year. We have passed this oak tree many times on our walks.



Other Local Stations

After the piece about the Middlewood Stations in the March edition, some more about local stations.

Poynton Stations

The Manchester and Birmingham Railway opened in stages from Manchester and reached Stockport in 1840 with a station at the north end of the uncompleted Stockport Viaduct. Upon completion of the viaduct, a second station opened on 15th February 1843 as Edgeley. By 1844, it was the town's principal station.

The Poynton branch from Stockport opened on 9th June 1845 serving the collieries. The extension to Macclesfield opened on 24th November 1845 with a station at Midway to serve Poynton and a temporary station at Beech Bridge to serve Macclesfield.

Poynton (Midway) was replaced by the current station on 1st August 1887.

Prestbury Tunnel

Between Poynton and Macclesfield, a tunnel was needed at Prestbury. This was constructed in 1845 by George W. Buck. The south entrance arch is made from ashlar buff sandstone, and is Grade II listed. The north entrance arch is in brick and of a simpler design. The keystone of the northern arch has the 1845 date, and the company's initials.

[George W. Buck also designed Stockport Viaduct and the Dane Valley Viaduct.]



The south entrance pictured from the road bridge over the railway near Prestbury station

Macclesfield Stations

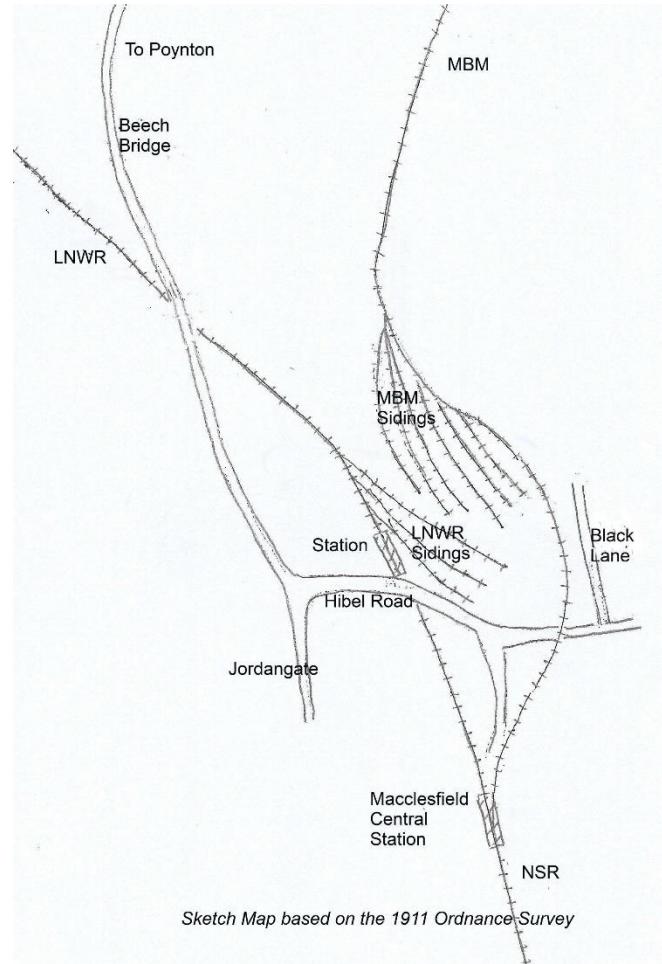
Macclesfield Hibel Road railway station was opened as a joint station by the North Staffordshire Railway (NSR) and the London and North Western Railway (LNWR) on 13th July 1849, with the opening of the NSR route to Uttoxeter via North Rode and Leek. It replaced the earlier LNWR station at Beech Bridge. Built right at the point where the track of the two companies made an end-on junction, the station was managed by a joint committee of the two companies.

With the opening of the Macclesfield, Bollington and Marple Railway (MBM), the NSR opened a new station less than 500 yards further south called Macclesfield Central. It had been hoped that the new line could run into Hibel Road, but the LNWR objected to this and neither would the LNWR agree to share Central station. The sketch map shows how the MBM track had to curve round Hibel Road station and the LNWR sidings.

Both stations remained open until 1960, when the decision was taken by British Rail to concentrate services on a redeveloped Central station. The refurbished Central station, now renamed simply Macclesfield, opened on 7th November 1960; the same day that Hibel Road closed.

Part of the area which was occupied by the two sets of sidings is now utilised by the Silk Road and Tesco. The presence of the Silk Road means that the Middlewood Way cannot complete the MBM route to Macclesfield station and it now goes over the Silk Road on a footbridge.

Macclesfield has a Black Lane which has retained its name to this day whereas Poynton's Black Road has now become Towers Road.



Sketch Map based on the 1911 Ordnance Survey



I've Left You a Letter

I haven't forgotten - you reminded me in January, our 60th anniversary I mean, it's in the Summer.

Now, as things are, I'm afraid that world cruise is off owing to COVID. What a shame. But you wouldn't want to be stuck in a cabin for eighteen weeks in case of an outbreak, would you?

All those years ago when I promised you a holiday in Switzerland unfortunately is also a casualty. What a pity I didn't pay up for that before now. (By the way, I noticed that our passports expire next year - they may not be worth renewing, Pandemic again).

Our plans to invite all our family and friends to a party may have to go on a back burner as, with the state of vaccinations in Europe, we may be put back yet again into further restrictions.

Still, the good news is that with the money saved with all this, we'll be able to have the roof repaired.

I'm now going for a long walk while you read this letter so don't wait up.

Love you, Babe, you're a Diamond.

(Remember, I promised your father you'd always have a roof over your head!)

Ian Beverley

Things to Do

Sudoku No 21

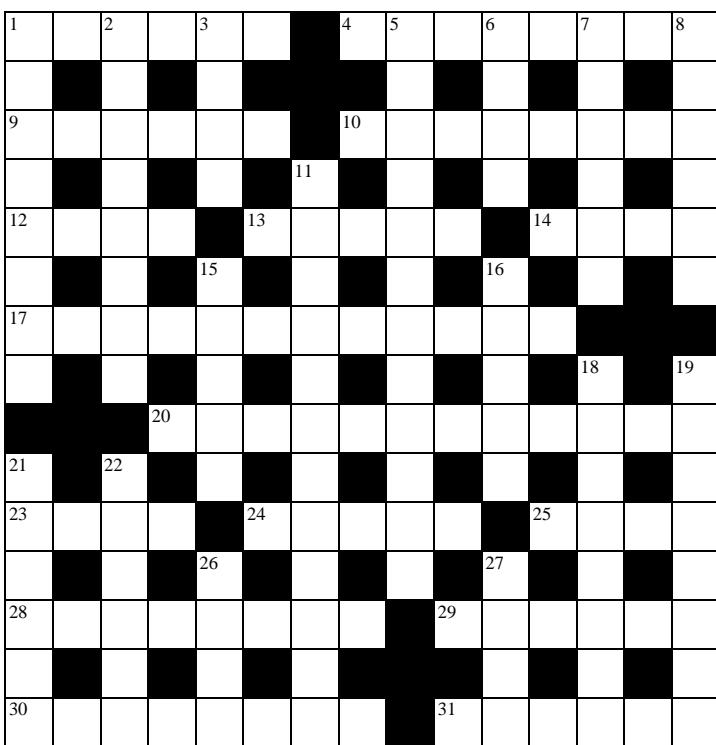
7	2				3	1		
	8	4					7	
		5		2				
			5	8	4			
1				4	3			
			8	4		6	5	
6		7				8		
3		2		1				

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

Below is the solution to No 20

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

Crossword No.31



ACROSS

1. Direction for a vote (6)
4. Hurries from affected queen aboard ship (8)
9. Give back ticket profit (6)
10. Measurement of length, time, colour and church come together for a moment (8)
12. Bear goes back to get a plaything (4)
13. Notice, but no time by the Italian ruin (5)
- 14 Applied thought with minutes to go (4)
17. Sense of foreboding; - tense soldiers consumed by it (12)
20. Elves sent her out anyway (12)
23. Take notice in the edition (4)
24. Peer round inside farm building (5)
25. City, somewhere between India and Quebec (4)
28. Possibly pointless organ, with a very quiet finish on ninth (8)
29. Terrain's tilled holding implant (6)
30. Generosity shown by the capital of Sweden, reportedly? (8)
31. Leaves theses unbound (6)

DOWN

1. Songs and joints in these flying machines (8)
2. Given due allowance, but not aired perhaps (8)
3. Categorise variety (4)
5. Endorsement of religious rite (12)
6. Power audible in tiny creature (4)
7. Man said to be serious (6)
8. Odds on Cheshire runner coming back second, but goes too fast (6)
11. They may supply a drug to man with tooth problem (12)
15. Either way, mention it (5)
16. Bury Milan team (5)
18. Put down instruction to duck? (8)
19. Attacks just like sailors on the radio (8)
21. In truth, rallying is a form of slavery (6)
22. Back boxing gym for a drop-dead figure? (6)
26. A unique occasion in times past (4)
27. Irish novelist came here primarily to creep (4)

Submitted by **Nigel Burin** and **Eileen Shore**. If you are interested in being part of a u3a group to compile crosswords, please contact Nigel via groups@poyntonu3.org.uk.

Solution to Crossword No 30

H	O	N	D	U	R	A	S	A	T	H	R	O	B
O	O			N	D			Y		O		R	
N	I	G	H	T	J	A	R	A	P	E	R	C	U
E	O		I	M				E		O		N	
S	P	A	C	E	B	A	R	E	F	F	U	S	E
T	L	D	N		Q		A		T		T		
					S	T	A	U	N	C	H	E	S
B	Z	R	I	I		E	D					E	
A	F	I	C	I	O	N	A	D	O				
L	G	E	E		P		T		M			S	
L	U	G	O	S	I	F	R	E	U	D	I	A	N
O	U	L		O	R			O	R	N		I	
T	O	R	P	I	D	A	Q	U	E	D	U	C	T
E	A	N			U	E			E			C	
D	O	T	A	G	E	T	O	P	N	O	T	C	H

More quiz questions from Hooha.

1. Name the smallest breed of horse in the world
2. At 80, Tom Jones has recently become the oldest male singer to do what?
3. How long is the Macclesfield Canal?
4. How many sons did Eleanor of Aquitaine and Henry II have?
5. Whose latest book is called “Wake Up”?

Answers to the quiz in the previous edition

1. Who wrote the pop standards “Wichita Lineman” and “By The Time I Get To Phoenix”?
Jimmy Webb
2. Where is Pocahontas buried?
Gravesend, Kent
3. Which painter was the first President of The Royal Academy?
Joshua Reynolds
4. Name the world’s highest capital city.
La Paz, Bolivia
5. Who designed the well-known diagram of the London Underground?
Harry Beck