



# Poynton u3a News

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***poyntonu3a.org.uk***

***Issue 37-1***

***13<sup>th</sup> Dec 2021***

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## **Editorial**

Welcome to the twenty-eighth edition of these electronic newsletters. With more content in this issue, there is just enough space to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

As always, if you would like to write an article or provide some pictures, send them to [news@poyntonu3a.org.uk](mailto:news@poyntonu3a.org.uk).

## **Poynton u3a Update**

### **Christmas Meeting –Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> December**

Remember that if you would like to attend the Christmas Meeting you MUST purchase a ticket (£2 - members only) and this has to be reserved in advance. Please let me know if you would like a ticket, which can be paid for and picked up on the day. It promises to be an entertaining afternoon with a performance from Joel Wilding (singing) whom some of you may have seen before at local events, a Christmas Quiz, a Crossword puzzle and a raffle, not to mention festive nibbles. Please email me on [enquiries@poyntonu3a.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@poyntonu3a.org.uk) to reserve your seat.

**Jayne Barnes**

## **Poynton u3a Membership Renewal**

### **What is the membership fee for 2022?**

After consideration, the Committee has decided that the fee for Poynton u3a renewals for 2022 will remain at £5 for the whole year. Our £5 fee just pays for the per capita fee which we pay to “Head Office” which is £4 and the Beacon membership system fee (£1 per member). Any additional costs this year will be taken from our reserves.

Remember your current membership expires on December 31, 2021. You need to send off your renewal before taking part in any activities in 2022.

However, to allow for any vagaries in the postal system, your 2021 membership card will be accepted as proof of membership during the month of January.

We thank you for supporting our efforts during 2021 and hope that you will continue to do so in 2022.

## **How do I renew my membership?**

In order to prevent long congested queues developing to renew your membership, there will at present be no renewals processing in the Council Chamber in January. Renewals will be accepted by post or drop-off only (see below).

No membership cards will be issued at General Meetings.

The preferred method of payment is by cheque. If this is not possible, use cash.

### **Send**

- 1. Your name(s) and membership number(s)**
- 2. Stamped addressed envelope (SAE)**
- 3. Cheque for £5 made payable to Poynton U3A or cash**

**to Poynton u3a Membership Secretary, Cecilia Storr-Best, at 62 Clarendon Road, Hazel Grove SK7 4NS.**

To save yourself a stamp, you can use a drop-off point in Poynton. The list of addresses can be obtained by emailing the Membership Secretary as indicated below.

Renewals requests left at these addresses will be forwarded to the Membership Secretary for her to process.

You can also drop your renewal off at a General Meeting but in all cases remember to enclose a SAE.

If there are any changes to your membership details, please ensure these are included as well. Members with a printer can use the form on the next page. If you have no access to a printer, the details requested may be written by hand and enclosed with the fee and SAE.

Without a SAE, you will not receive a membership card.

If you cannot use the above system for whatever reason and you want to renew, please contact the Membership Secretary by email ([membership@poyntonu3a.org.uk](mailto:membership@poyntonu3a.org.uk)) or telephone (0161 285 8582).

## **Poynton u3a Membership Renewal Form      Subscription for 2022 is £5.00**

Memberships expire at the end of December. To continue to enjoy the activities run by Poynton u3a you need to renew your membership by January 31<sup>st</sup> 2022 by post using the following form.

Title \_\_\_\_\_ First name \_\_\_\_\_ Family name \_\_\_\_\_ Membership no. \_\_\_\_\_

Please list any changes to your contact details (including changes to your email address) :-

Please post this form with a stamped self-addressed envelope and a cheque for £5.00 (made payable to Poynton U3A) to Poynton u3a Membership Secretary, 62 Clarendon Road, Hazel Grove SK7 4NS.

## **General Meetings 2022**

Below are the events planned for 2022. We will have a speaker unless otherwise stated

January 18th	The Golden Age of Radio	Roger Browne and his piano
February 15th	Development of Work from Paper to Wood, Mixed Media and Textiles	Nikki Parmenter
March 15th	<b>AGM</b>	
April 19th	Hearing Dogs	Christine and Hearing Dog Jessie
May 17th	North West Air Ambulance	Victor Crawford
June 21st	Medieval Salt Making in Cheshire	Tony Bostock
July 19th	The Life of a Magistrate	Lynn Moores and colleague Nick
August 16th	Humanitarian Talk	Jim Holmes (Photographer)
September 20th	The Building of The Manchester Ship Canal	TBA
October 18th	The Sixties Decade or Decadence	Frank Vigon
November 15th	The Natural History of Christmas	Dr Michael Leach (Wildlife Photographer)
December 20th	<b>Christmas Meeting</b>	

## **Diners' Club**

The Diners' Club met for the first time since lockdown to enjoy a meal at Ciao Restaurant Poynton. Seventeen members enjoyed the good food and company. It was great to get together again with old and new friends.

The next meal will not be until February next year. Details will be announced at the January meeting.

## **Norma Shreeve**

## Bird Watching Group – Etherow Country Park

Fifteen members arrived on an overcast but mild morning for a walk round this attractive country park which in the wide variety of autumn colours was quite stunning. The river Etherow was in full flow and the waterfall at the end of the park was in full spate making a spectacular sight but not ideal for the bird life, although we did see one heron.



*Spot the heron!*

The lake provided a variety of bird life, mainly more common species in large numbers but especially noteworthy were six tufted ducks and a pochard with a stunning red eye which most obligingly swam right up to us. We were told by a local birder it had only arrived overnight.

Further up the Park we came across our first mandarins, and later found a feeding site with around 30 birds and later another with some 20. Etherow is a stronghold for these exotic birds with around 80 thought to be present making it one of the country's best sites for these birds.



Life has gone full circle in some ways and our next outing was on the morning of Friday 10th December to Riverside Park in Macclesfield (the venue of our last outing before lockdown started last year).

**Peter Owen and Peter Kirk**

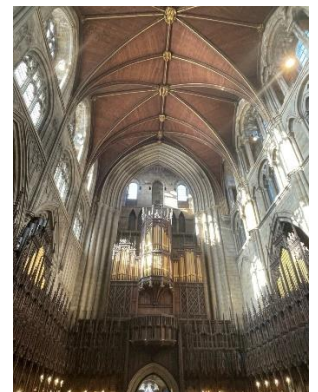


## Photography Group

Between late October and early December, the photography group went on a couple of outings. First of all, we visited the Museum of Science and Industry in Manchester where we photographed some of the machinery. We also visited Buxton where members captured some interesting scenes which they then sought to present with a nostalgic flavour.

Following some useful tips from Peter on how best to photograph spiders' webs, several of us devoted some time around gardens and hedgerows, cameras in hand, on dewy mornings in search of sticky nets sometimes with their host arachnids, poised ready to intercept passing flies.

Here are a range of photographs spanning the topics mentioned above, sometimes at different times and in different locations.



Keith Batchelor



## Members' Contributions

### My Bus Pass Adventure

I was recently invited to a friend's 70th birthday celebration on the Isle of Wight. I decided to travel using my bus pass whenever possible and to extend my trip to two weeks. (N.B. I packed a good supply of face masks...)

I researched the journey to London and decided, in order to avoid an overnight stop on the way, to get the 199 bus to Manchester Airport and a Megabus to London Victoria. While in the capital I stayed in a very nice hostel and took in a musical - "Anything Goes" at the Barbican. I sat in the middle of the back row of the "Gods", had a lovely chat with another single lady, and thoroughly enjoyed the show. The next day I jumped on a boat along the Thames and had my first trip on the Emirates Airline Cable Car across the Thames.



*Travelling light!*



*Emirates Airline Cable Car*



*Portsmouth Harbour*

I then travelled to Portsmouth on a National Express bus and caught the catamaran to Ryde. I used my bus pass to get to my b&b in Sandown, and then again to get to Ventnor for my friend's celebratory afternoon tea. I had a lovely 12 mile coastal walk the next day from Sandown to Ryde, and bussed it back.



*Bembridge Harbour, Isle of Wight*



*The Great Tower  
Christchurch*



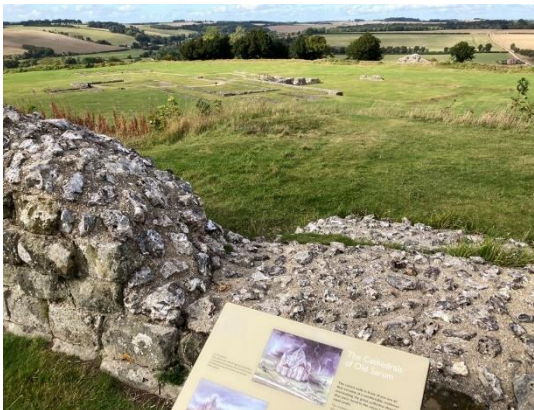
*The Jurassic Coastal Walk near  
Swanage*

After meeting some Morris dancing pals the next morning, I took the bus to Yarmouth and the ferry to Lymington, where I caught the bus on to Christchurch.

After a night in a b&b and a walk around Christchurch I got on the 50 Breezer bus to Swanage. This was a fabulous trip on an open top bus (yes, I used my bus pass!) including the Sandbanks/Studland chain ferry.

I spent a couple of days walking along the Jurassic coastal path before continuing on to Salisbury. This involved going back on the Breezer to Bournemouth and then catching another bus the rest of the way.

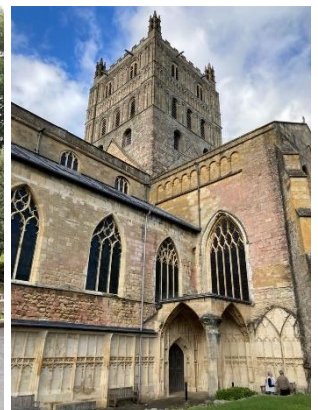
After a couple of days exploring the countryside around Salisbury, I decided I wanted more seaside walks so I travelled westward. I couldn't work out a bus route this time without an overnight stay, so I "cheated" and booked a train to Weston-super-Mare. I enjoyed some good coastal walking before rewarding myself with scones, clotted cream and jam on the pier, sheltering from the now torrential rain and watching the determined motorcyclists take part in the annual beach race.



*Old Sarum, Salisbury*



*Grove Park, West-super-Mare*



*Tewkesbury Abbey*

From here I decided to visit Tewkesbury, which entailed a series of four buses, via Bristol and Cheltenham, but the journey went smoothly with time to wander at each stop.

After a couple of days' walking around the area I decided I really should head home and release my daughter from her cat-feeding duties. I bit the bullet and took a National Express bus back to Manchester city centre, and a final bus pass trip on the good old 192!

## **Cecilia Storr-Best**

### **Christmas Fairy Person**

Every year, since I think 1925 when my parents married, this magical fairy has topped the Christmas tree. I believe that she is both magical and beautiful, although many would not agree.

She was made in Germany with a special number on the back of her head under her hair which denotes her origins. She is made of pottery with arms and legs set out straight and

attached inside the body by wires. Her lovely face has eyes which open and close, her long blonde hair has a straight fringe and goes down past her shoulders, not like modern dolls whose hair could be brushed but hair of its time.

In the next few days boxes of Christmas “stuff” will be brought into the sitting room, the tree put together, branches unfolded, lights wound round and arranged. Then the special moment when her box is opened for her to be greeted with the usual delight then fixed to the top of the tree; all the other well-loved decorations which have been amassed over the years will be carefully placed, ready for her to preside in her blue-eyed glory over another Christmas time.

Before Twelfth Night the whole process will be reversed until she remains alone before her hibernation in her box. This is a sturdy oblong cardboard cigar box, lined with various sheets of tissue and other papers, and also contains her very fragile wings which left their original setting some time ago and her very flimsy embroidered original skirt, which was replaced by a Cindi doll net dancing skirt. She shares her space with a green Celluloid teddy-bear, whom she has known for at least 70 years, a painted glass smiling strawberry and a small painted bell.

Wonderful or rather sad, depending on how you view things. Really, she would benefit from some work from the Bear Ladies of Repair Shop fame, but meanwhile she and I keep going.

**Helen J Stanley**

## Reflections

When I was just a little boy  
What I liked better than some toy  
Was sitting on my father's knee  
To listen while he read to me.  
The terrifying Brothers Grimm  
Had not the same effect on him,  
But I of course, concealed my fright  
For thrills were blended with delight  
As they, I think, were apt to be  
Even to the cowardly.  
Fairy tales, Arabian Nights  
Young heroes caught in awful plights.  
But later on (for Father's sake)  
Advance was made to Sexton Blake  
Detective work and clues, Dad said  
At first might be above my head.

But very soon he put me wise  
To words like 'alias' and 'disguise'  
Deceptions, bad men used to score  
Against their enemy - the law.

On Christmas Eve I could not sleep,  
Above the sheet I took a peep -  
Someone filled my pillow-case  
I recognised a whiskered face.  
Shocked I was but loyal and true  
I never told of what I knew -  
That Father was a fraud because  
I'd found out he was Santa Claus,  
And not a person of high rank  
In a position with a bank.

**Ian Beverley**



## Widnes-Runcorn Bridges

One of the most striking aspects of a visit to the Catalyst chemical museum in Widnes (see the article in the previous issue) is the view from the top storey of the building out over the River Mersey showcasing the Widnes-Runcorn bridges. There are three bridges at the present time – a railway bridge and two road bridges.

Mersey crossings have taken place for centuries at Runcorn Gap, the first narrow point upstream from Liverpool. The first ferry service (a rowing boat) was established in 1178 in association with nearby Norton Priory and was the reason the two towns developed on either side of the Mersey at that location.

[Poem about the Runcorn Ferry -

<http://monologues.co.uk/Runcorn-Ferry.htm>]



The first bridge to cross the Mersey at this location was the Runcorn Railway Bridge, also known as the Ethelfleda Bridge or the Britannia Bridge. In 1861, Parliamentary approval for a railway crossing the Mersey was obtained by the London and North Western Railway (LNWR). The first goods traffic crossed the bridge on 1<sup>st</sup> February 1869 and the first passenger train on 1<sup>st</sup> April. The Admiralty insisted that the clearance under the bridge at high water had to be at least 75 feet which meant that there had to be long inclines on either side. The bridge carries a double-tracked railway and a pedestrian footbridge.



*The turrets of the railway bridge  
behind the newer road bridge*



*The long railway incline on the Widnes  
side of the bridge to reach the required  
height*

During the early 1890s, the Manchester Ship Canal was constructed on the Runcorn side passing underneath the railway bridge. After the Manchester Ship Canal had been constructed the journey by ferry had to be made in two stages, linked (according to some accounts) by a climb over the wall of the canal.

The official name of the bridge has been a subject of debate. Locally, it has been called the Queen Ethelfleda Viaduct but is also called the Britannia Bridge. It has been claimed that it was named after Ethelfleda, a ruler of the historic Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Mercia, and that the southern abutments and pier of the bridge have been built on the site of the Saxon burh that had been erected by her in 915. This connection is alleged to be the reason why LNWR had opted to have elements of the bridge castellated. There are three shields above the footway, one of which shows Britannia (from the crest of the railway company) which leads to the bridge being known as the Britannia Railway Bridge.

Surprisingly (at least to me), the next bridge to be built at Runcorn Gap was a Transporter Bridge. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a road bridge was clearly needed but it would have to pass high enough over the canal to allow the passage of ocean-going ships. The cost of doing this with a conventional bridge was felt to be prohibitive and the concept of the transporter bridge was adopted. Completed in 1905, it was Britain's first transporter bridge and the largest of its type ever built in the world.



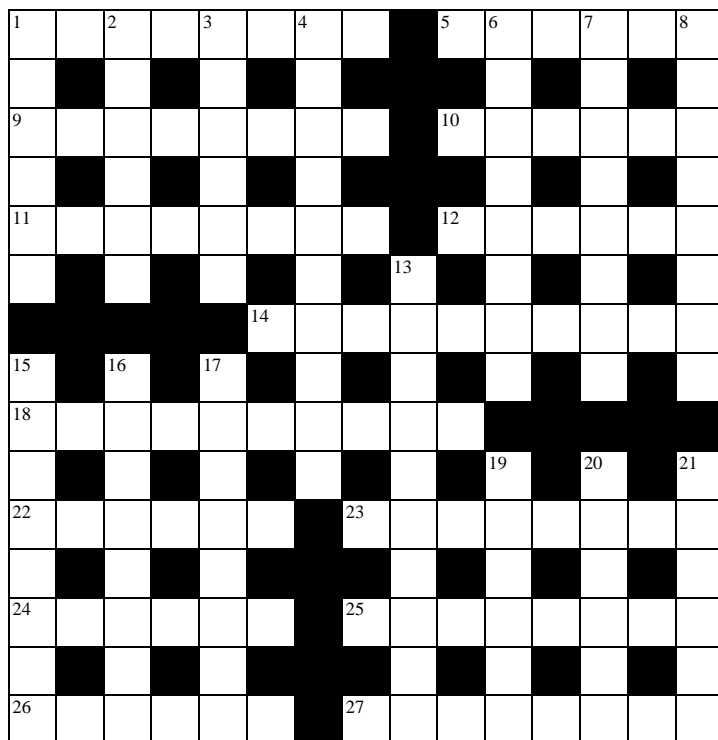
It continued in use until 1961, when it was replaced by a through arch bridge, now known as the Silver Jubilee Bridge. The transporter bridge was then demolished. The Silver Jubilee Bridge is shown on the previous page alongside the railway bridge with the road to the left of the running down to where the transporter bridge was situated.

As the decades passed, traffic over the bridge increased, it became more congested and also became more in need of maintenance. On 14<sup>th</sup> October 2017, a new six lane toll bridge, the Mersey Gateway Bridge, opened. The Silver Jubilee Bridge then closed and reopened in February 2021 as a toll bridge.



## Things to Do

### Crossword No. 38



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](mailto:groups@poyntonu3.org.uk).

### Solution to Crossword No 37

A	P	O	L	L	O	M	A	S	S	E	N	E	T
E	O	R	I	W	P	I							
R	E	I	N	C	A	R	N	A	T	I	O	N	
G	N	H	A	M	D	K							
H	O	G	S	H	E	A	D	I	C	E	B	O	X
L				S	O			R		R			
L	A	N	C	E	T	R	E	S	U	M	I	N	G
			A	R		O	I						
B	O	T	S	W	A	N	A	S	A	S	H	A	Y
T						R	T				B		
I	T	A	L	I	C	T	R	E	P	I	D	L	Y
O		E		I		I	N	D		A			
M	A	T	U	R	E	S	T	U	D	E	N	T	
A		O		C	T	T		A		E			
I	N	U	N	D	A	T	E	O	W	L	I	S	H

### ACROSS

1. Epic mine produces Christmas fayre (5,3)
5. Your spirit in a tipsy, cheerful mood (6)
9. Interweaving patterns of bike race I insert in shoe fasteners (8)
10. Chicken company goes to part of hospital (6)
11. Surprisingly seeks May in blindfolds (3,5)
12. Traveller making backward second attempt at needlecraft (6)
14. In Kent, hair muddles ref but one is relaxed (6-4)
18. Happily found new reg in Chinley comic (10)
22. Announcement about unfrozen water? (6)
23. I enter cathedral to find clergyman (8)
24. Eavesdrop on insect (6)
25. Brain boxes encourage principals (8)
26. Country bird (6)
27. Quietly aggrieved to produce gifts (8)

### DOWN

1. Deliberated about type of wine (6)
2. Spice for little Margaret to have on fruit (6)
3. Prophet, from the East, he controls prison reform (6)
4. Sacking tie needed for this seasonal activity (3,7)
6. In some places now I estimate there will be the worst of weather conditions (8)
7. Mad, pulling these at Christmas (8)
8. Confirmed that Mr Balls brought over erratic drones (8)
13. British cloth measure circle the Queen for this loud church activist (4,6)
15. Minimal glance at exam (8)
16. The French ordered truce over the river for the speaker (8)
17. This makes perfect, price absorbing deed (8)
19. At the start did I send her enough spoons for all items on the menu? (6)
20. Southern mode of transport produced by 21 down (6)
21. Hundred right on river cause an alarming event (6)



Sudoku No 28

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

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

Below is the solution to No 27

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

More quiz questions from Hooha.

1. Lady Gaga appears as Patrizia Reggiani in a new film about which designer's murder?
2. In which 1962 film did James Mason paint the toenails of his young co-star?
3. In 1987 at what age did former silent movies star Lillian Gish appear in her last film "The Whales of August"?
4. Which 1960 Western was a remake of the Japanese "The Seven Samurai"?
5. Name of 1982 animated film based on the 1978 Raymond Briggs picture book.

Answers to the quiz in the previous edition

1. How many English Monarchs from William the Conqueror have been crowned in Westminster Abbey? *39, all Monarchs from William the Conqueror have had a coronation ceremony in Westminster Abbey, apart from Edward V and Edward VIII who were never crowned.*
2. In 2020 was the population of London 7 million, 9 million or 11 million people? *The population of London in 2020 was just over 9 million people.*
3. The father of actress Zoe Wanamaker was instrumental in the building of what famous building on the South Bank of the Thames? *The Globe Theatre, reconstruction of the original Globe Theatre on Bankside on the south bank which was a project begun when Sam Wanamaker, American actor, established the Globe Playhouse Trust in 1970.*
4. Where does the annual London to Brighton veteran car race begin? *Hyde Park. London*
5. Who is the current Lord Mayor of London? *William Russell*