

# Poynton u3a News

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

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## **Editorial**

Welcome to the thirty first edition of these electronic newsletters.

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**

### **General Meetings**

Our last general meeting was held on 15<sup>th</sup> February when Nikki Parmenter's talk describing her artwork was well received. There is an appreciation of Nikki's work and some accompanying pictures on Pages 5 and 6.

Our next general meeting is on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> March and is the AGM. Remember that to attend the AGM you must be a member for the current year and there is no charge for admission. You should have received the documents relating to the AGM around three weeks ago. There will be no facility to renew memberships on the day.

After the formal business of the AGM, the Town Clerk, Mrs. Haf Barlow will be giving a short presentation followed by a "Question and Answer" session. She will be telling us of Council events from 2021, proposals for the coming year and how we may be able to get involved.

Looking further ahead, the April general meeting will be on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> April when we will be having a talk about Hearing Dogs.

### **Photography Group**

At February's meeting, Peter gave a presentation about the use of negative space within our photographs, as a way of drawing attention to the subject of the photographs. At the start of this month's meeting, we reviewed our photographs with this in mind. Despite being quite a challenging concept, most of the group submitted photographs which showed very clearly that the use of "negative space" makes for interesting shots.

The February outing was to the Imperial War Museum North, to see the, now permanent, display of poppies. Most of the group also had time to look around the rest of the museum, which is well worth a visit and entry is free! The display of poppies is beautifully done but

somewhat difficult to photograph due to the structure of the space in which they are displayed. During this month's meeting we also reviewed these photographs.

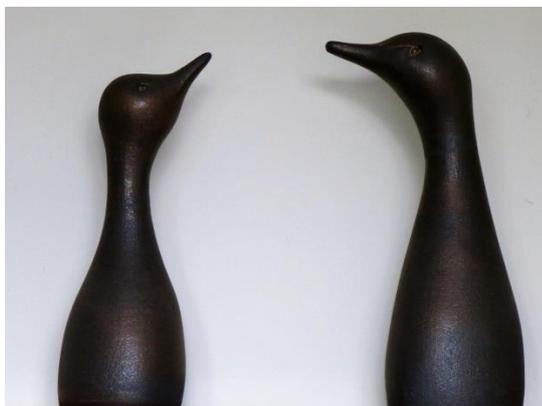
I gave a talk entitled "Silhouetto", encouraging the group to use people in our photographs for effect. These figures can be in silhouette, but not necessarily. They also don't have to be people: wild or domestic animals can be used to the same effect. The inclusion of a single figure can make an otherwise empty photograph more interesting, or can help the viewer to appreciate scale. We looked at some photojournalists' examples.

Janet showed some of her photographs, with a focus on reflections. Many of the photographs were of familiar local scenes like Lyme Park, Dunham Massey and the canal. Some were of very interesting reflections in puddles; something that certainly made me think that I should look at puddles more carefully! Janet's talk began with a real surprise, as the trees and pylon in the first three photographs were in fact reflections, which Janet had cropped and rotated. Ingenious!

The March outing will be to Liverpool, where we will find a wealth of photographic opportunities. The next group meeting will take place on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> April in Poynton Civic Centre.

On this page and the next are some examples of our photographs from the latest topics.

## Lyn Howdle





**Keith Batchelor**

## **Photography Group Bonus**

This is a photo of an old caravan I noticed in Poynton. I spoke to the man who was repairing it but he has some way to go! He said finding replacement wheels was difficult. He thought he might be able to source some in North Wales or Devon ... An interesting man - he didn't drive or have a TV, listened to a transistor and had walked the Pennine Way six or seven times.

I took the photo when inspecting footpaths for the local Ramblers.

**Graham Walker**



## Missing Artwork

In 2016 to celebrate the fifth anniversary of Poynton u3a, our Needlecrafts Group (then called the Embroidery Group) produced a large “banner” with individual panels for specific interest groups (see adjoining pictures). A large amount of time and effort went into producing this impressive artwork. In amongst the pandemic and the Civic Centre deciding they could no longer provide storage for our equipment, this valued piece of work has gone “missing”. Do you know of its whereabouts? If so, can you please inform a member of the committee.



## Members' Contributions

### Renaissance

The glitter of Christmas - memory,  
New Year has come and gone.  
Wind and rain play a symphony,  
The sun has seldom shone.

But light filters finally  
In the early morning time  
Making the world more kindly  
And fashioning sense and rhyme.

Small clumps of snowdrops,  
Struggling to survive  
Would never thrive on hilltops,  
Here - seem glad to be alive.

Look forward to early Maytime,  
To blossoms lacing trees,  
Losing Winter's starkness -  
Decorating shiny leaves.

**Ian Beverley**

## Nikki Parmenter

On Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> February the speaker at the General Meeting was Nikki Parmenter. Nikki is a Poynton based artist who specialises in mixed media, textile-based pieces. Many people will know Nikki as an art teacher from Poynton High School. She takes her inspiration from a variety of sources and is particularly interested in the way in which ancient societies created a series of visual symbols to represent the things which were important to them. She investigates myth and legend and draws parallels between societies, showing that, although many people have different beliefs, we are all united by visual iconography.

She has exhibited widely both in group and solo shows both here and abroad and has had articles published in magazines and on the internet. She also features in Kim Thittichai's book, 'Experimental Textiles'. Her work has won prizes at The Ferens Open, The Potteries Open and the Grosvenor Open Exhibitions.

Nikki gave her presentation to the group using Powerpoint and the much-improved audio system at the Civic Hall. After the very interesting talk describing the pieces she has made and how she uses different materials, she let us see... and TOUCH! the wide range of examples of her work that she had brought with her. They were made from a huge range of materials including felt, fabric, threads, beads, metal, acetate, Angelina fibres, wire, hose pipe, pipe cleaners, plastics, jewellery, wood, car spray, paint, padding, metal mesh, felt pens, paper and funky foam.

As well as more traditional equipment she uses various other items such as a sewing machine, jigsaw, glue gun, soldering gun, iron, photocopier and hot air gun.

I, for one, was blown away by the quality and intricacy of her work. My own particular favourites were the Great Barrier Reef, the frogs and the beautiful bowls. It was artwork the like of which I have never seen before.

*On the next page, there are some more pictures of Nikki's work on display at the meeting.*





Jayne Barnes

### Port Sunlight

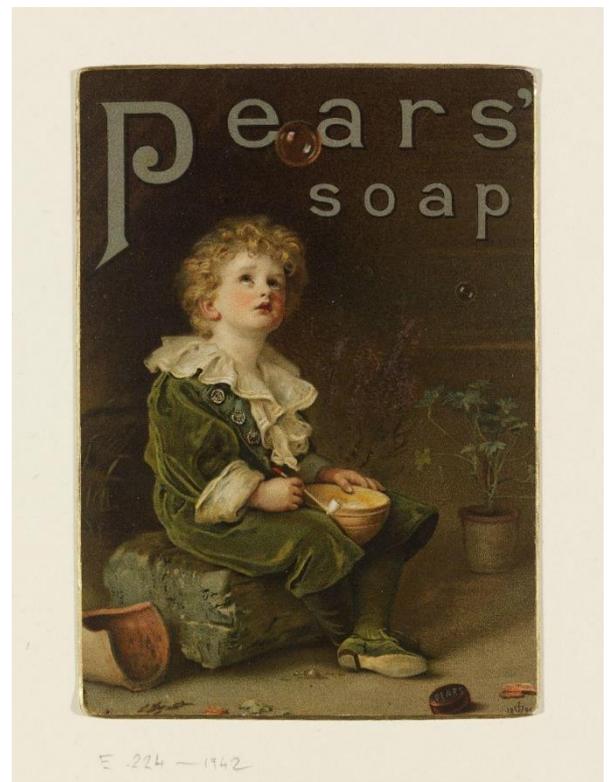
William Hesketh Lever, b.1851-d.1925, was born in Bolton and owned Lever Brothers, a large manufacturer of household soap. This was a very successful company and made him a multimillionaire. He also built a village for his employees and named it Port Sunlight after his most successful brand of soap. Most of the homes in the village of Port Sunlight, which lies on the Wirral, are rows of different styles of terraced houses, on wide and spacious roads. They were designed by various architects between 1899-1914. For many working-

class families to be able to move to a modern family terraced house at the time must have been a dream come true. If you came from the crammed and crowded homes of Liverpool and then moved to Port Sunlight, it would have felt like paradise.

The soap was sold all over the world. William Lever travelled far and wide promoting his products. It is where he started to amass his outstanding collection of artefacts, some of which he used to promote Sunlight soap. In the village of Port Sunlight, he built an art gallery. It is used to house his famous collection.

The gallery is named after his wife, 'The Lady Lever Gallery', and it displays many famous artists. It has a vast collection of not only paintings but 19th century furniture, Chinese porcelain from the Ming, Han and Tang dynasties and statues from Greece and Rome. There are embroidered tapestries hanging from the walls and a full set of Wedgwood china. A charming set of smelling salt bottles are displayed in a large frame. Even if you are not an art connoisseur and I count myself in this, the collection provides such an eclectic mix. In it there would be something to appeal and impress all tastes. In any gallery, there are paintings that attract you and some that do not. In this gallery there is one artist that Lord Lever favoured - John Everett Millais - and he was the artist that caught my eye during a recent visit.

John Everett Millais was b.1829 in Southampton and d.1896 in London. He was married to Euphemia (Effie) Gray and they had eight children. His artistic talents won him a place at the Royal Academy School at the age of only eleven. He was part of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood which was made up of painters, poets and art critics. The pictures that caught my eye were of children, which Millais became well known for painting in his later years. One of the most famous is called 'Bubbles' which is a portrait of a little boy with curly blonde hair, seated on a low bench, blowing bubbles. The picture was used to promote Pears Soap in 1886. The company was bought by Lever Brothers, (now Unilever) who acquired it in 1920. Millais was at first very reluctant to use any of his work in advertising Pears Soap and also this is a painting of his grandson Willie James, whom he wanted to protect. In the end he agreed. It is suggested that the bubbles were made from the soap.



'The Little Speedwells Darling Blue' 1891, is another charming picture of one of Millais' grandchildren, Phyllis. The little girl is pictured sitting on the ground in a local meadow. She is wearing a white dress and hairband, contemplating a small bunch of Speedwell Blue, which is one of the flowers to appear in early spring and is beloved by children. As I stood viewing the painting, I got the feeling that any minute she would look up and show me the delicate bunch of flowers. Some artists have the ability to draw you into the paintings and make you stand and stare for some time. Children in rural areas called the blue flowers 'angel eyes' or 'bird's eyes'. The name suggests hope, fragility and vulnerability, much like the bubbles in the painting of Phyllis's brother, Willie. The painting is a lasting memorial to Phyllis as she died aged only seven.



'A Dream of the Past: Sir Isumbras at the Ford,' is a painting based on lines from a 14th century romantic verse. It is of a Medieval Knight returning from a war, rescuing two local children from a swollen river. The children are sat on the horse with the Knight, who is dressed in full armour. The girl is sat in front of the Knight and the little boy is behind him. The girl is riding side saddle and is being stopped from sliding off the horse by the Knight's hands holding onto the reins.

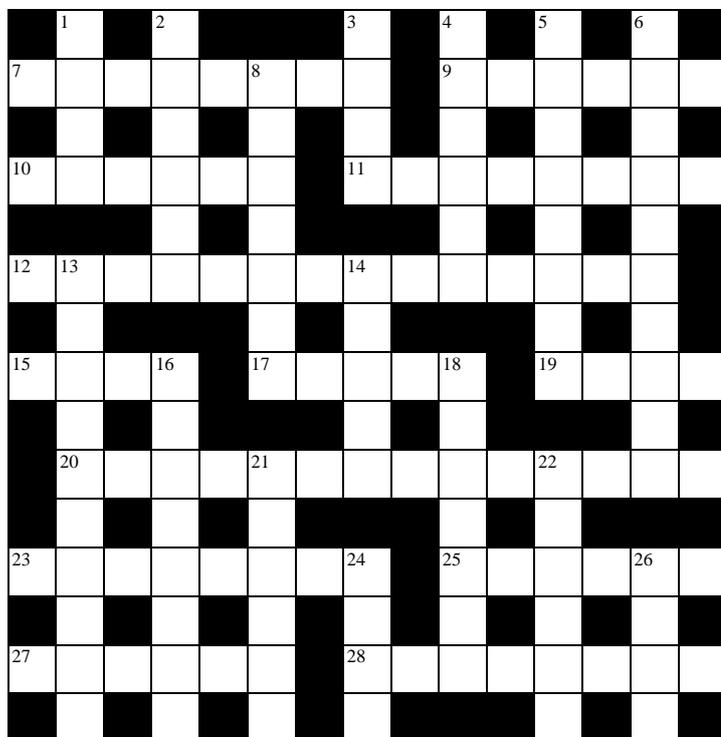


However, this does not reassure her. The look on her face of anxiety and worry says it all as they are about to cross the river. The little boy is of the greatest concern. Health and safety are not part of this picture. The boy is sat behind the Knight and is desperately trying to hold on to his armour. His little arms do not reach all the way round and it must have been very slippery. At the back of the horse is a bundle of fire wood, which would have poked the little boy in the back each time the horse moved. It was then I also noticed that the little boy's bare foot was resting on the Knight's large sword. I know this is a fictional painting, but as you concentrate on the scene you can get lost in the moment. It is the artist drawing you into the picture, making you believe it is real. I hope the children got home in one piece, with the little boy's toes still intact!

**Susan J Pyett.**

## Things to Do

### Crossword No. 41



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 40

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

#### ACROSS

7. Spring and almost time to retire? Almost (4-4)
9. Shakespeare's comic heroine is raging briefly in the midst of hoax (6)
10. Quiet edge, quiet seafood (6)
11. Terribly proud guards have heavy fall (8)
12. Doctor to hardliner now dreaming (2,7,5)
15. Go away and sing some jazz (4)
17. Small and friendly bees (5)
19. Rest of newspaper, oddly skipped back (4)
20. A vote on the directors generally (6-3-5)
23. GB's eggy bait decomposed (8)
25. Cryptic clue, 1D: father of geometry (6)
27. Gentle spirit coming over in mountain (6)
28. Slowing down of religious service by one who is eccentric and old (8)

#### DOWN

1. One of the first people named in Somerset House? (4)
2. No bail out for West Bromwich? (6)
3. Conservative conned the country (4)
4. Meeting captive, I'm impressed (6)
5. Fail to welcome foreign press and go off in different directions (8)
6. Cooked squid, I lie right by kitchen gadget (10)
8. Innards of limpet used for energy? (7)
13. Fruits' dreadful transience (10)
14. Promote latex pants (5)
16. Reptile burying head of prey in the ground (8)
18. Gather round Loach film, most likely to inherit the earth? (7)
21. Adage always covered in grass (6)
22. Of songbirds frolicking, so nice (6)
24. Fawn found in English vineyard (4)
26. Not much I love, I appreciate that (4)

## Sudoku No 31

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

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

Below is the solution to No 30

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

More quiz questions from Hooha.

1. At which castle was the final battle in the 1958 film *The Vikings* shot, purporting to be in Northumberland?
2. What is a Blue Glaucu?
3. What does the acronym SPECTRE stand for in the James Bond stories?
4. The entire moat of The Tower of London will be filled with what types of flowers to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee
5. In which Italian city did Katherina Minola, "the shrew", live in Shakespeare's play *The Taming of the Shrew*?

Answers to the quiz in the previous edition

1. What is baleen? *Baleen is a filter system inside the mouth of whales, made of keratin which when the whale takes in water filters it, retaining any krill etc before the water leaves the whale's mouth.*
2. What animal have the Chinese authorities recently banned from Hong Kong after 11 cases of Delta variant of Corona virus having been found in these animals?  
*Hamsters - the culling of 2000 has been ordered and there is a ban on importation.*
3. Who has recently been appointed Colonel in Chief of the Grenadier Guards, replacing Prince Andrew? *Her Majesty the Queen*
4. Who originally recorded the song "If I were a carpenter"? *Bobby Darin*
5. Frank Matcham designed which northern Opera House which opened on 1 July 1903?  
*Buxton Opera House*

And finally...

We have been asked by the Civic Centre to include the following in the newsletter in the hope that one of our members might be interested. It is described as an opportunity that would suit someone who has free time in the evenings. It is not too physically demanding and will be very straightforward.

Follow the link for more information.

<https://www.poyntontowncouncil.gov.uk/UserFiles/Files/Building%20supervisor%20job%20advert%20Mar%202022.pdf>

**Lauren Schjelderup** – Administration - Poynton Town Council