

Poynton u3a News

poyntonu3a.org.uk

Issue 42-3

15th Dec 2023

Poynton u3a Update

Thank You

As another year draws to a close, I would like to say thank you for your continued support. I wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Vera Williams – Chair of Poynton u3a

Poynton u3a Membership Renewal

What is the membership fee for 2024?

After consideration, the Committee has decided that the fee for Poynton u3a renewals for 2024 will continue to be **£10 per annum**.

Remember your current membership expires on December 31, 2023. You need to send off your renewal before taking part in any activities in 2024. However, to allow for any vagaries in the postal system, your 2023 membership card will be accepted as proof of membership during the month of January.

Once you receive your new membership card, please show it to the activity group leader at their next meeting you attend in 2024.

How do I renew my membership?

Membership renewals are done by postal application.

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

Send: (if possible, by January 31st)

- 1. Your name and membership number if known;**
- 2. Stamped addressed envelope (SAE); and**
- 3. Cheque for £10 made payable to “Poynton u3a” or cash
to Poynton u3a Membership Secretary, 62 Clarendon Road, Hazel Grove SK7 4NS.**

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 below. 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).

Poynton u3a Membership Renewal Form Subscription for 2024 is £10.00

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 31st 2024 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 £10.00 (made payable to Poynton U3A) to Poynton u3a Membership Secretary, 62 Clarendon Road, Hazel Grove SK7 4NS.

General Meetings – December and the Programme for 2024

On Tuesday 19th December, we have the Christmas Meeting when the entertainment will be provided by the *Fingerless Magician*. Entry is by ticket only.

Below are the events planned for 2024. We will have a speaker unless stated otherwise.

January 16th	Alice Walker	Becoming Mastermind Champion 2022
February 20th	Louise, Lancashire Wildlife Trust	The Work of the Wildlife Trust
March 19th	AGM	
April 16th	Frank Vigon	Imitation the Sincerest Form of Robbery - Art Forgery
May 21st	Dr Steve Barratt	Unidentified Flying Objects
June 18th	Graeme White	The Magna Carta of Cheshire
July 16th	James Ellison	Five Hours Up - Five Hours Down - Soloing the Matterhorn
August 20th	Keith Warrender	Manchester and Cheshire Oddities
September 17th	Josephine Gosling	Strolls Past Sculptures
October 15th	Bruce Kendrick (Author)	An Eye for the Birds
November 19th	Louise, Lancashire Wildlife Trust	The Plight of the Humble Bee
December 17th	Christmas Meeting	

Poynton Leisure Centre

Cheshire East Council is currently carrying out a Strategic Leisure Review which could result in the closure of Poynton Leisure Centre. The Council will be focusing on continued investment into the centres where the usage is the highest. This will consider not only the use of these sites but also by the community and sports groups who respond to this consultation. As the leisure centre is used by individual members in addition to some of our groups, it is important that you respond in order to keep the facility open.

All responses must be with the Council by 7th January 2024.

Members' Contributions

Board Games Group

The inaugural meeting of the board games group was held on November 15th. Seven players attended and we played two games of Mexican train dominoes, followed by Triominoes.

We decided to hold future meetings on the second Tuesday and fourth Friday afternoons each month. It was an enjoyable afternoon with new friends, enhanced by delicious brownies provided by Kate.



If you are interested in joining this new group, please email groups@poyntonu3a.org.uk with 'u3a board games enquiry' as the subject.

Cecilia Storr-Best

A Letter to Christmas

Hey there - I know you can't see or hear me but I just had to get this off my chest.

You're coming round too quickly. Back in say 1948 when I was twelve, Christmas took an age to arrive. Now, it seems I've only just finished returning unwanted gifts to the stores when we land on the cusp of the following festive season.

Starting in August, I find that large tins of Quality Street are being promoted at a discount, 'Don't Miss Out' we are urged. Chain and department stores also start to remove stocks of summer clothing in order to feature heavier, dark-coloured items. Christmas cards and crackers soon appear; the supermarket battle for supremacy in the mince pie stakes emerges.

Soon, relatives start the seasonal battle to relieve themselves from the responsibility for entertaining Grandma and Grandad, for example, 'We had to throw out the mattress from the spare bedroom and we can't afford to replace it 'til after Christmas'.

Then we have the compulsion to purchase unnecessary quantities of foodstuffs 'just in case' and we are tempted to buy multi-deals of alcohol, that is, 'Buy six bottles and save 25%'.

What's more, the annual bills like insurance premiums and club subscriptions always seem to drop through the letterbox at Christmas - more financial discomfort!

Well, I feel a little better now after this mild explosion of rage and will refrain from banging my head against the nearest wall - for now.

'BAH HUMBUG!'

Ian Beverley

Our Local History group does a Heritage Walk

As part of Poynton's first Heritage Open Days' events, I led two walks along Park Lane. For the September meeting of the Poynton u3a Local History group I decided to re-run one of the walks. This time, not obliged to keep to public footpaths, I took the group down the passageway to the rear of No. 53 where, conveniently, was an old plastic garden chair which I sat on facing the other group members. This meant that they had their backs to No. 55 while I held up an A4-sized version of the photograph below and read what I'd typed on the back of it. The typed text went as follows.

"I lived at 53 Park Lane, next door. Like many houses in Poynton, we also had a galvanized tank like this above our outside, and only toilet. It would hold about 300 gallons of water, usually somewhat less, but would still weigh over a ton, plus the tank.

The water tank was filled by spouting from the roof gutters to supply a softer water than what came through Lord Vernon's water mains - which was ground-water sourced and was very hard. Sometimes there were specks of coal dust in it.

We had a third tap besides the hot and cold over our fireclay combination sink in the scullery which was the other side of the visible wall. This was supplied with water from this tank and was used for washing hair and more delicate clothes.

Next to the outside loo we had a shed, never locked, where my father kept his plumbing materials and tools. There was a bench with a vice (responsible for many trapped fingers) which formed the top of a hutch where he kept his ferrets. His saws were always very rusty but as children we grew up with tools and would make contraptions for riding on when we could get hold of old pram wheels or the like.

The bottom shed was 'the coal place'. Although there was a small wooden door in the brick wall to give access for the 'coal man' to tip his coal-bags through, the door in the yard was easier to use for access. This door too was never locked."

When I finished reading, I informed the group to turn around and see the photograph for themselves.



Photograph of the back of No. 55 Park Lane taken in May 2022. It still looks much the same nowadays.

Today, No. 55 Park Lane is occupied by Modern Nails and No. 53 Park Lane is Stig's Hairdressers.

Alan Hulme

The Lamp

I'm rather glad that I've bought a street lamp for my drive.

Superseded and retired, it stands to be admired.

By those who like the old and rare and, for the long-forgotten, care

In contrast to the gentler rays that dimly lit our yesterdays.

I'm rather glad I've got a street lamp in my drive.

A relic of the fading past which somehow manages to last.

And proudly as its uses cease, ends up as a collector's piece.

It conjures up a winter scene when dusks were soon and frosts were keen

And skies drew on a sullen mask when lamp-men hurried to their task

And with a touch of magic wand, lit up the high streets and beyond

And as the evening grew to night, marauding mists put moon to flight

And changed to vague, but scary ghosts, the lamp's tall white rime-clad posts.

Do I regret that I've set a street-lamp on my drive?

No cable, gas or candle-power give challenge to the darkling hour

And only in revealing day, the lamp's stark elegance hold sway.

Yet, at least, I'm sure it tends to please my many canine friends!

Ian Beverley

Walking Group – Christmas Walk

The members of the walking group have been out in the Peak District for our Christmas walk and lunch. We went to Chelmorton, just the other side of Buxton, walked around the local area and had a splendid lunch at the Church Inn. Unfortunately, the weather did not play ball and we spent most of the walk in driving rain looking at the inside of a cloud! But that just gave us more time to chat. Every cloud has a silver lining, yes? And it is a well-known assertion for us walkers in the north of England, that there is no such thing as bad weather, just inappropriate clothing.



Well, here we all are gathering at the start of the walk in our **very** appropriate clothing.



And then inspecting the 5000-year old (give or take a few years!) burial chamber on the hill above Chelmorton. It looked a good place to shelter but, fear not, no one was left interred there!



Finally, we arrived back at the pub for hot drinks, hot food and a somewhat drier environment.

Marilyn Westbrook

Tales from the Isles of Scilly – Tresco Abbey Garden

Ownership of the Islands

Historically, the Isles of Scilly were primarily ruled by a Proprietor or Governor. The governor was a military commission made by the monarch in consultation with the Admiralty in recognition of the islands' strategic position. An early governor of Scilly was Thomas Godolphin, whose son Francis received a lease on the Isles in 1568. The Godolphins and their Osborne relatives held this lease until 1831, when George Osborne (not that one), 6th Duke of Leeds, surrendered the lease to the islands and they then returned to direct rule from the Duchy of Cornwall. (The Godolphin name features on the Isles to this day.) In 1834 Augustus Smith acquired the lease from the Duchy for £20,000, and created the title *Lord Proprietor of the Isles of Scilly*. The lease remained in his family until it expired for most of the Isles in 1920 when ownership again reverted back to the Duchy of Cornwall. Today, his descendants, the Dorrien-Smith family, still hold the lease for the island of Tresco.

Creation of the Garden

Augustus Smith was a man of independent means and an independent spirit. The seclusion of Tresco suited him. He realised that with the mild climate he could create an exotic garden unlike anything on mainland Britain.

A thousand years earlier a Benedictine priory had been established on Tresco but very little remained. A couple of archways and some broken down walls but it was enough to catch Smith's imagination. As mentioned in the previous article, the islands, though blessed with a mild climate, were lashed by the salt-laden Atlantic gales and he realised that a priority was to create shelter belts to protect his new Garden. He quickly found two trees that were both salt-tolerant and quick growing, the Monterey Pine and Cypress, both from California. He used the indigenous gorse to protect the young saplings.

As the Garden and Smith's horticultural knowledge developed, after a while he became recognised as a considerable plantsman. This allowed him to correspond with other influential gardeners including Sir William Hooker at Kew Gardens. This relationship was especially fruitful and the Abbey Garden and plant collection developed rapidly.

It has been particularly beneficial that the Garden has been in the care of the same family for five generations. This has given continuity and commitment. Each generation has made its contribution. Despite the benign weather there have been a number of climatic disasters; the first in December 1929 when a five-day storm destroyed 600 mature trees including much of the shelter belt. More recently in our own time the snows of 1987 and the hurricane of 1990 caused immense damage especially one coming immediately after the other. On each occasion the Garden has been restored, replanted and re-planned.

Planting

On entering the Garden, you pass over a blue bridge into the Mediterranean Garden. This is the most recently developed part of the Garden.



By contrast, the area surrounding the Old Abbey ruins was where Augustus Smith made his first landscape planting. It is believed that Benedictine monks settled here between 1042 and 1066. Next to the ruins is the Well Garden where it is thought that the monks discovered fresh water.



The garden covers 17 acres, the top half being a terraced south-facing hillside. The plants with which we are familiar from British gardens are largely absent, replaced by rare and exotic species. There are plants from all over the world. Here is a selection. These pictures were taken in September when the colour in the garden was beginning to decline.



A single Monterey Pine (from California) and several Norfolk Island Pines (an island off Australia)



Aeoniums including the rare purple variety (Canary Islands)



Protea (South Africa)



Agapanthus (South Africa)



The Neptune steps (named from the statue of Neptune at the top) illustrate the slope up the hillside with the Top Terrace backed by the shelter belt of Monterey Pines and Cypresses (California)



Red squirrels were introduced on to Tresco in 2012 and 2013. From the original 20, there are now around 100. There are no grey squirrels on Tresco and therefore no risk of the deadly virus infection. The red squirrels can roam freely over the island but mainly stay in the Abbey Garden where their favourite food consists of the large pine cones of the Monterey Pine.

Parts of the islands are covered in lichen, here illustrated on a bench in the gardens. The profusion of lichen is apparently a reflection of the air quality.



A bronze statue by David Wynne of the children of Robert and Emma Dorrien-Smith, the current owners of Tresco. The statue is symbolic of the freedom on the Scilly Isles and was unveiled by Princess Diana in 1991.

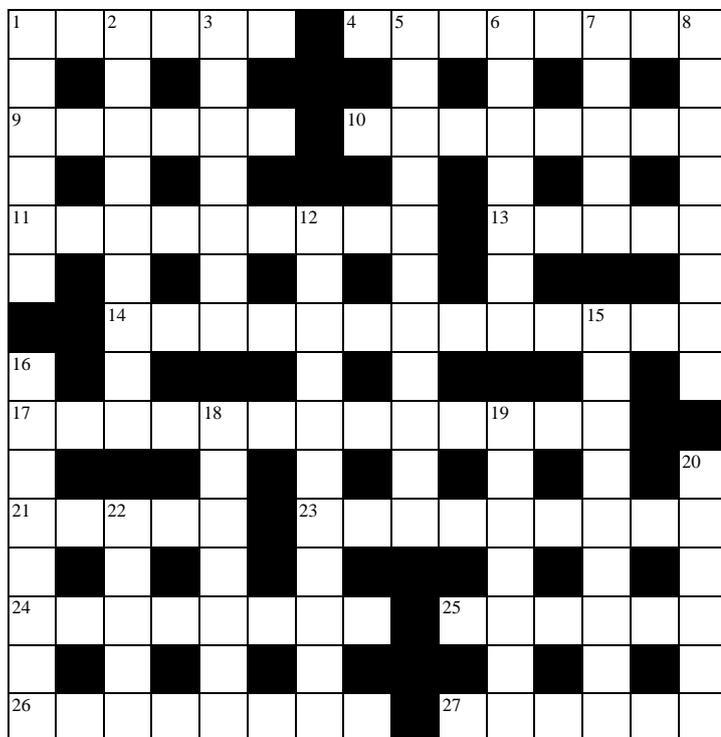
As an alternative to the much-maligned ferry, you can take a helicopter from Penzance to Tresco. The landing area is conveniently situated just outside the entrance to the gardens.



Carol and Derek Gatenby

Things to Do

Crossword No. 57



ACROSS

1. Work quietly in forays to shoot these (6)
4. Playfully leap and rise where climbing's intended (8)
9. Sir Andrew does not have nerve to follow the French alliance (6)
10. Scary relative touring Northern Ireland (8)
11. Metal pies are thrown in the interval (4,5)
13. Right in challenging both for beating (5)
14. Revealing purple dot gown worn for old explosive scheme (9,4)
17. Within business people is severe anxiety (13)
21. Pair from second class marathon for example (5)
23. For the measurement of coldness or the flow of tears? (9)
24. Get used to Bill meeting client without hesitation (8)
25. Spoils are not commonly wrapped by heartless thieves (6)
26. Agonised over how to find fault (8)
27. Nil for distributing old coin (6)

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

There was no crossword in the last edition

DOWN

1. Tell of beheaded bishop, for example (6)
2. Game that has scan containing pitch and fighter jet (9)
3. Instrument to reverse nothing on this mound (7)
5. Saint I write daily journal for paid role (11)
6. One flying out of Yugoslavia to Romania (7)
7. Italian team put in grave position? (5)
8. Dishes of unusual parts (8)
12. Mathematical devices for farm vehicles (11)
15. Squire's way to cross blue river (9)
16. Sheath to blister the minstrel (8)
18. Time to explain 14 across for example (7)
19. Poles dividing it all to invest in office (7)
20. Fewer working class (6)
22. Part of circle about to retire in African capital (5)

Sudoku No 48

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

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

Below is the solution to No 47

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

More quiz questions from Hooha.

1. What is the nickname for Congleton?
2. Which pudding is named after a Russian prima ballerina?
3. What is the name of the church in Prestbury?
4. In which country did playing cards originate?
5. What does ROYGBIV represent?

Below are the answers to the questions in the previous edition.

1. Who was Edith Swan Neck?
The common law wife of King Harold Godwinson. She found and identified his body after the Battle of Hastings.
2. How many eyes does a bee have?
Five
3. What is a Bandicoot?
A large rat
4. What nationality is Greta Thunberg?
Swedish
5. Who was a leading suffragette from Leicester?
Alice Hawkins, whose statue stands in Leicester City Centre.