



# Poynton u3a News

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## Poynton u3a Update

### Committee Members

The Membership Secretary and the Assistant Membership Secretary have swapped roles. Marilyn Westbrook is now the Membership Secretary and Cecilia Storr-Best is the Assistant Membership Secretary.

The Committee has co-opted an additional member – Kate Clarkson.

### General Meetings

The next General Meeting is on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> May when Dr Steve Barratt will be talking about *Unidentified Flying Objects*.

Following that, on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> June, Graeme White will be telling us about *The Magna Carta of Cheshire*.

## Members' Contributions

### Photography – The First Three Months of 2024

We have once again had a varied programme of topics and visits provided by Peter and Hilary, the group organisers aided by Geraldine, Lyn and Janet. These have ranged from creating triptychs to experimenting with different light sources.

Our days out are sometimes relevant to these topics and photographs taken can be used to illustrate what we have learnt and a selection shown at the following meeting. Occasionally a member of the group will give a short presentation on a subject of their choice. In February Keith showed us photographs of his cycle trip round Indonesia, full of colour and adventure!

In January each year we are assigned an annual project on which to work throughout the year. This year our topic is 'The Year 2024 month by month'. The idea being to take one photo each month to illustrate that particular month. At the end of the year, we mount our photos onto a large board which can be displayed at our January meeting. Last year our topic was 'Our Industrial Heritage' The results are always interesting!

Our first outing this year was to Nantwich in January. It is a beautiful, historic market town in South Cheshire with many black and white timbered buildings, riverside walks, shops, cafés and dominating the town the Parish Church of St. Mary, built in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. It has many interesting stained-glass windows and an amazing tapestry called The Jubilee Curtain completed in 1977 by the St Mary's tapestry group to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II. After admiring various aspects of the town, we had a tasty lunch at a café inside a bookshop.



*The whole tapestry (left) and a detailed view (right)*

In February a group of us met at Dunham Massey park to wander round the winter garden which, at that time, was carpeted with snowdrops including a rare 'yellow' snowdrop. We were given a clue as to its location which was as well because we would not have spotted it! The 'yellow' part was not the petals but at the top of the stem, so slightly misleading! After our tour of the garden, we took a muddy walk across to The Swan with Two Nicks for a well-earned lunch!





More recently in March we visited the Manchester Museum on Oxford Road where there was a special exhibition entitled 'The Golden Mummies'. It's many years since I visited this museum with our family so there were a lot of new exhibits to see. Again, we enjoyed lunch at the museum café during the visit. (The 42B bus which starts in Woodford and stops by Budgens takes you down Oxford Road and stops near the museum.)

## Kate Marsham

### Walking Group

For our April walk, 20 of us met at the car park at Sutton Hall, just south of Macclesfield. This is a grade 2 listed building, the current Hall having been constructed in the 16<sup>th</sup> century on the foundations of a 12<sup>th</sup> century building. It was a manor house and the family home of the Earls of Lucan, amongst others, but has now been converted into a restaurant/pub. It is full of nooks and crannies, a snug, a library and several different dining areas. It's easy to get lost!

The weather forecast was rather doubtful, so we set off suitably clad following the canal towpath in a southerly direction. This goes past an entrance to Danes Moss Nature Reserve, but we didn't make a detour. We left the towpath at a bridge by the Fool's Nook Inn, a once popular stop for boaters, but it



has been closed for several years now, and looks rather derelict. We walked along a couple of quiet lanes to reach Sutton Reservoir, which was equipped with tables and benches, ideal for our coffee break. It was lovely to sit there looking over the reservoir.



We then followed footpaths across fields, and as you can imagine, given the amount of rain recently, we encountered lots of MUD! Well, everyone had been warned, and we all managed without mishaps. An added bonus was that the weather behaved itself.

We returned to Sutton Hall car park via the village of Sutton, changed out of our muddy boots and had an enjoyable lunch in the restaurant.



**Sandra and Keith Batchelor**

## **Running Amok**

What a strange word this is; “run” and “running” have a column and a half to themselves in my dictionary.

You can run out, run in, run short, run up and run down. You can run rings round people or run for President. If you are the Sheriff you might gather a posse and run the “Baddies” out of town, especially if they have been running guns.

Before you leave home, remember to run a comb through your hair; check that your stockings haven’t run; because today you might run across a tall, dark, handsome man who would offer to run you home in his rundown runabout.

I began to think about the words “run” and “running” recently when staying in an hotel, where a polite elderly gentleman held the heavy door open for me; I was struggling along using crutches. Jokingly he said, as I thanked him, “Don’t run along the corridors!” And I was instantly transported back to my school days, where this indeed was a strict rule.

I recall on one occasion at the age of seven, I was sent with an important message to the Headteacher. All the way, hastening down the long corridor, I rehearsed the message: “Miss Stevens says please can you call an ambulance because Vera Smith has run into a post and cut her head.” Of course, by the time I had encountered the Headteacher, the message had become somewhat confused, and it seemed that “Vera Smith had run to cut off the head of Miss Stevens” and, I added to give weight to this news, “There was blood running everywhere!”

“I will go and find out what is going on,” said the exasperated lady after I had tried to explain; “Miss Stevens wants an ambulance to cut off Vera Smith’s blood.”

She dismissed me with the words “Run along!” So I did, galloping off down the corridor at speed, only to be intercepted by Mr Danbury, teacher of Class Four, who would not listen

to my explanation and made me stand in a corner and not have my playtime. And I still resent that!

You see, I was puzzled that a simple word could mean so many things.

When I was young, middle-class people had begun to be able to afford a motorcar, and when new, they bore a sign in the rear window "Running In; Please Pass". No matter how hard I peered nobody ever *was* running inside the vehicles. The owners of the cars had to stop often, my dad said, because the cars ran on petrol. "You had to have enough petrol if you were going for a Sunday run out into the countryside," he said. Anyway, he continued, if *he* ever had a motorcar, it would not be one of these run-of-the-mill Austin Sevens. He'd choose a posh Rolls-Royce, the ones with the running boards. But at present his salary would not run to a car.

On one occasion, Mother and Grandma went shopping. Mother returned with a parcel and announced that she was going to run up some new curtains. I waited, eager to watch this exhibition of athleticism, but all she did was to get out the sewing-machine. On the same shopping trip, Grandma said she had bought a runner. I was somewhat disappointed to find out that this turned out to be a narrow strip of carpet for the hall floor.

That summer, we were due to go on holiday, and Grandad made us hurry because we were running it fine; we must catch the 10.54am train which was running from Banford Station to Skegness. I looked at him oddly; trains, I knew, did not run. They sort of huffed and chuffed a bit, but they went along joined to rails.

Grandad liked to watch cricket and cheered each time a run was scored. He placed bets on horses but did not win often; his chosen horse was usually the runner-up.

One Wednesday, Grandma said she'd have to run up to town to the Market to buy things; flour, as she had run out; butter, she had run short of. She could not go to the local Co-op because she had run up a bill there and could not pay until Grandad brought home his wages. She could do without making the journey, she complained, as she was already run off her feet.

Mother sent for the doctor as my nose was running; he examined me and said I was running a temperature, and I was run down and needed some medicine. Colds ran in our family; we often got them.

On one occasion, I was in trouble with mother because I had left the tap running, wasting water; she was running out of patience with me and she could not be always running after me, she said. So, I decided to run away from home, for I hated having to run errands for my parents. But I was run to ground, found hiding in the coal shed.

Well, I'll finish here as I have run out of things to write.

**Ruth Howard**

## Keukenhof Tulips

Keukenhof is a world-famous garden situated near the city of Lisse in the Netherlands. It attracts visitors from all over the world. In 2023, Keukenhof welcomed 1.4 million visitors (of whom 80% originated abroad) although it is open for less than 8 weeks. The common image of Keukenhof is of row upon row of brightly coloured tulips.



Keukenhof is in fact a floral park covering 79 acres and filled with around 7 million spring bulbs.

The history of Keukenhof dates back to the 15th century. Countess Jacoba van Beieren (Jacqueline of Bavaria) (1401-1436) used 'Keukenduyn' [kitchen dunes] as a hunting ground for the kitchen of Teylingen Castle. Keukenhof Castle was built in 1641 and the estate grew to encompass an area of over 200 hectares.

Landscape architects Jan David Zocher and his son Louis Paul Zocher, who also designed Amsterdam's Vondelpark, redesigned the castle gardens in 1857. That park, in the English landscape style, still constitutes the basis of Keukenhof.

In 1949 a group of 20 leading flower bulb growers and exporters came up with the plan to use the estate to exhibit spring-flowering bulbs, signalling the birth of Keukenhof as a spring park. The park opened its gates to the public in 1950 and was an instant success, with 236,000 visitors in the first year alone. Thus, Keukenhof is celebrating its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year.

7 million bulbs are planted annually by hand showcasing over 1,600 varieties. Although mainly tulips, there are numerous other flowers, featuring hyacinths, daffodils, lilies, roses, carnations and irises. The flower bulbs are provided by 100 exhibitors: flower bulb growers and exporters.

The layout is still reminiscent of an English style garden with 2,500 trees, a lake, canals and 15km of winding footpaths. The main difference is the density of bulb planting which leads to the intensity of colour.





*A mound of colour greets the visitor*



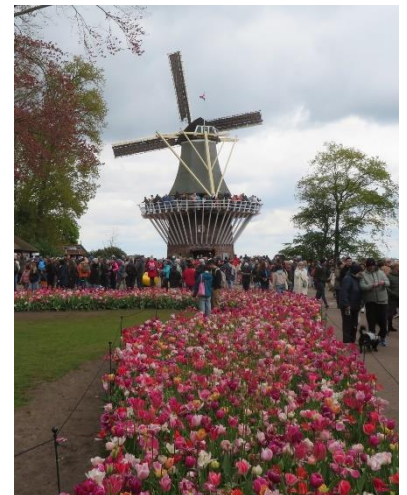
*75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary*



*Hyacinths mixed in with the tulips*



*Walking on water?*



The windmill, which dates back to 1892, has been at Keukenhof since 1957.

Meanwhile, what about the bulb fields. The bulb fields are not a part of Keukenhof; they belong to the local bulb producers. To protect the valuable plants, you can only visit the bulb fields by boat.

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Tulips originated in Central Asia and began to appear in Europe in the 1550s, with the first of these flowering in the gardens of the French explorer Pierre Belon situated near Le Mans. In his "Les Observations de Plusiers Singularities", published in 1553 he describes "Lils Rouges" (tulips) as being in abundance there. Tulips quickly spread to many other parts of the continent, and first arrived in England in 1582.

Carolus Clusius introduced tulips to the Netherlands in 1594. By the 1600s, they had become hugely popular and, by 1635, a tulip mania seized the population with rich and poor alike taking part in the speculative trading of tulips. This pushed prices to extremes until an inevitable crash in 1637 where values plummeted, the market crashed, and speculators were left ruined.

Despite the crash, tulips continued to remain popular and by the 1700s were widely grown in the gardens of English stately homes.

## **Carol and Derek Gatenby**

### **Northwestern Scenario**

The Northwest wears a stern beauty;  
Disdainful of mere picture-postcard prettiness-  
Even its austere hills, night masking them in merciful darkness,  
Enchant and charm when Winter, that ironic illusionist  
Causes their high windows to come alive with sudden stars.

Tapering chimney-fingers point towards bleak skies  
At the unveiling of reluctant dawns.  
Beyond the old drab towns, roads that are older, more historic  
Call out to regions whose unpretentious pleasure-giving  
has earned but scant praise.

North-west beauty is strong and brash;  
It means weather-beaten Pennine vertebrae,  
Pewter-grey drystone walls crisscrossing green grazing slopes of the dales.  
The silence of craggy moorlands broken by the feverish singing of helicopting larks.  
Summer dusks leisurely quenching fiery sunsets athwart Nor'western seaboards.

Sentinel towers of mellowed churches dominating russet valley villages  
And, over-wild fellside rims, the enduring, hardy farmsteads,  
Storm-assaulted, frost-gripped, yet like Northern country folk,  
Keeping a constant warmth within.

## **Ian Beverley**



## Things to Do

Sudoku No 52

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

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

Below is the solution to No 51

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

More quiz questions from Hooha.

1. When was the last total solar eclipse visible in the UK?
2. Where is King John's tomb?
3. When did the volcano Vesuvius last erupt?
4. Which is the largest national park in the UK?
5. How many spots are there on an individual dice? *[or die if you prefer – Ed]*

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

1. In which year was Magna Carta signed?  
*1215 on June 15<sup>th</sup>*
2. Which emperor lived at Dunham Massey?  
*Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia, who lived there from 1936 - 41*
3. What colour are Mickey Mouse's shoes?  
*Yellow*
4. What did Samuel Pepys bury in his garden to protect it from the Great Fire of London?  
*A Parmesan cheese*
5. Where is the Frog and Bucket Comedy Club?  
*Oldham Street in Manchester*