

New Mills and District



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

March
2016



Who nose French?

(... find out on page 3)

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Changes to monthly meeting

WELCOME to our first newsletter of 2016. Hopefully by the time you read this the rain will have ceased and Spring will be on its way.

This year there will be two changes to our usual schedule of monthly meetings. These may become permanent changes to that schedule if they are successful.

September Monthly Meeting

The September Monthly Meeting will be our annual Groups Display, which has previously been held in August. There will be a speaker at the August meeting.

A chat can make all the difference

OUR U3A is almost 12 years old and, as we age with it, I wonder if any members would welcome a Telephone Befriender?

The Accessibility Team do everything they can to enable members with mobility problems, be it illness or sight/hearing loss, to access interest groups and meetings. However, perhaps even this isn't possible for

From the
CHAIR

by ANN APPS

The September meeting will be listed as an open meeting in the New Mills Festival Programme. This will be an opportunity to publicise ourselves to potential members, and to the general community. Also our September Coffee Morning will figure in the New Mills Festival Programme, providing another opportunity to welcome potential members.

AGM

This year's AGM will be held in November, instead of October.

There will be a speaker at the October meeting. The reason for this change is a request from our financial people, for whom an October audit conflicts with other activities.

some people now. If you are isolated or lonely and missing a good conversation why not pick up the telephone and call me on 01663 745177 and we could arrange a mutually convenient time for a friendly chat, possibly weekly.

Also, if you would be interested in volunteering to talk on the telephone to other U3A members who can't get out and about please let me know. A friendly, personal call could make all the difference.

Ethne Bailey



Learning a language can be fun as our pictures here and on the cover show

Mind your language

FRENCH

IN February the topic for the Club Français was “describing a man or a woman”. In order to revise the vocabulary of the human body the members of the group recaptured their youth by playing “Simon says...”. They touched their noses, they opened their mouths, they crossed their arms, they put their hands on top of their heads... Fortunately Simon was very kind: he didn't tell them to touch their toes.

Bob Wass



TRAVEL

THE Travel Group closed the 2015 season with an interesting talk on the people of the Oma Valley in Ethiopia.

The 2016 season began again last month and future meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month at 2pm in the Town Hall. Come along and enjoy talks on Cuba, Lake Garda (above), South America, South African safari and more. If you would like to present a talk or get more information about the Travel Group give me a ring on 01663 765664.

Neil Baker

GENEALOGY

LAST December New Mills U3A's Genealogy Group joined neighbouring U3As from the Marple and Stockport area for a very interesting talk about a newly published source of information of interest to both family and social historians.

This was the first time that the local U3A genealogy groups had organised a joint meeting and it proved very popular. Marple Conservative Club was the venue, and every seat and parking space was filled in anticipation of an informative session. We were not disappointed.

The talk was by Myko Clelland of Findmypast, a genealogy website. He explained that the 1939 Register is a unique document produced in September of that year, and listing the names, addresses, dates of birth, marital status and occupations of the 41 million civilian residents of the country. The list was initially used to issue Identity Cards and Ration Books, and to assist with conscription to the armed forces.

A unique glimpse of yesteryear

After the war it passed into the hands of the newly formed National Health Service where it was used to issue Medical Cards and record medical details. It remained in use until 1991, when computerised records took over from the hand-written ledgers. Last November Findmypast, in collaboration with the

You can see who was living in your house or street when war broke out

National Archive, released a digitised online copy of the non-medical pages from the Register, much to the delight of most family historians. Usually with government records such as the ten-yearly census returns there is a hundred-year delay before

the records can be seen.

We will have to wait until 2022 to see details from the 1921 census; and as the 1931 census was completely destroyed by fire, and there was no census taken in 1941, the next complete list of the population would be the 1951 census to be released in 2052. Most keen genealogists have given up on waiting for that one! The release of the 1939 Register fills a big gap in the sources of information we can use to get started on our genealogy.

Although members of the armed forces are not included, the list was produced within a month of the declaration of war, so many of the young men and women who later fought in the war were still at home engaged in their peace-time occupations. The Register is a snapshot of Britain on the eve of war, and the

Right: The New Mills Home Guard showing off their mtorbikes outside the town hall
Below: A page from the 1939 Register covering St. Mary's Road, New Mills



E.D. Letter Code		Borough, U.D. or E.D.		Registration District and Sub-district		Date		PERSONAL OCCUPATION	
ADDRESS		SCHEDULE	SURNAMES AND OTHER NAMES	O. V. P. E.	M. P. E.	Day	Year	of	or
		No.		1	2	7	8	9	10
This record is officially closed.									
	do	1	Enoch Mary			1904	17	W. Stockport, Chesh.	
	do	103	Alcock Mary E			1904	25	W. Stockport, Chesh.	
	do	2	Alcock Alice			1904	07	W. Stockport, Chesh.	
	do	3	Alcock Mary			1904	14	W. Stockport, Chesh.	
	St. Mary's Road	104	Conroy Robert E			1904	02	W. Stockport, Chesh.	
	do	2	Conroy Bernice B			1904	02	W. Stockport, Chesh.	
This record is officially closed.									
	do	105	Taver William T			1904	24	W. Stockport, Chesh.	
	do	106	Taver Sophia C			1904	24	W. Stockport, Chesh.	
	do	107	High Robert E			1904	09	W. Stockport, Chesh.	

under review, so it may be worth waiting to see whether the cost is reduced, but meanwhile it is free to search the indexes, and a lot of information can be found there before deciding whether to hit the payment button.

You can search by the name of an individual or by an address. If family history is not your thing, it can be interesting to see who was living in your house or your street when war broke out. Once you find the right person or address and pay to unlock the household, you get to see the page where the household is listed. In most cases you will get to see the

presentation on the Findmypast website includes statistics, maps and newscuttings for each locality as well as the lists of households.

Myko showed us examples by searching for some of his relatives from the Stockport and Wilmslow area. The details he found confirmed some of what he already knew, but also added new

family members who had previously been unknown to him.

The disappointing aspect to some people is that Findmypast decided initially to charge a fee to view images of the actual pages of the Register, trying to recoup some of the expenditure involved in digitising and indexing the records.

This decision is currently

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neighbours, and some of their names may be familiar from stories passed down through the family.

Some members of the household may be blacked out, if that person is likely to be less than 100 years old and still alive. Name changes are recorded where women have married after 1939, so this can help family historians who are trying to track down long-lost cousins.

Inspired by the talk, several members of the Genealogy Group have since successfully pursued their families through the Register. One has made contact with previously unknown cousins, whilst another discovered that family members took in evacuated children from the city into their country cottage.

One grandfather was listed as a stretcher bearer with the ARP, raising visions of Dad's Army types of adventure. One member found that her mother was already concealing her real age, while another discovered a relative, previously thought to be a maiden aunt, living over the brush! It is always these side stories that make family history so much more



Evacuation from the big cities was a common experience for thousands of children during the war and many found themselves settled in our neck of the woods

interesting than just a list of names. You don't know what you will find until you look and, as always with family history, there is always the chance of discovering the odd skeleton in the cupboard!

Enthusiastic

Whatever part of the country you are from, and whether you were a babe in arms or just a twinkle in your father's eye in 1939, there will probably be something to interest you in this newly released record.

Have a look at www.findmypast.co.uk/1939register and see what you can find.

The Genealogy Group meets in New Mills Library Lecture Room on the second

Thursday of the month from 2pm to 4pm. We are a small but enthusiastic group, sharing our knowledge of and experiences in family research to help and support each other.

We also have use of the computers in the library to help people get started on the various genealogy websites.

New members are always welcome, so if you are interested in finding out more about your family in the 1939 Register, or in any other records, please do come along and join us, or contact our group leader, Catherine Bolton, at genealogy@newmillsu3a.org.uk

Margaret De Motte

All-weather wheels

THIS time of year poses particular problems for those on two wheels and tricky decisions for the Group Leader. Ice and snow is the main issue and with the fickle English weather it is not easy to predict what might happen on the day.

We have met on a Wednesday for some time now which suits most people most of the time and changing days means inevitably that some of the team will not be able to make it.

It therefore needs some serious weather to deter the hardy cyclists we have in the group. If we get a dry day, and some sunshine to lift the spirits then happy bunnies are we.

Our first ride of the New Year took us into Cheshire with the expectation that the weather might be more benign than in the Peak. The problem with easier cycling, however, is that you are not

CYCLING

working as hard and it can get chilly, particularly if it's windy.

The ride of 28 miles took us from Gawsworth Hall to Alderley Edge past the Wizard and over to Jodrell Bank and some well-earned lunch and warmth. We returned by Goostrey and Marton back to the cars at Gawsworth. We have used the Jodrell Bank café a number of times and it's a popular stopover for the cycling fraternity.

We have had interest expressed from one or two potential new members and we look forward to seeing them out with us over the coming months. We are a friendly group and the pace is relaxed with plenty of opportunity for chatting on the way.

Derek Peterson



Members of the Cycling Group ... ready for anything

Farewell to our good friend Angus

OBITUARY

THE funeral of New Mills U3A member Angus Munro took place at Macclesfield Crematorium on January 4, with a humanist service.

The music pieces the family chose were: Trains and Boats and Planes (Burt Bacharach), mainly to celebrate his association with the transport industry, then a piano instrumental version of “Bridge Over Troubled Water” and the final piece was part of the “Spring Concerto” from Vivaldi’s Four Seasons.

Angus was born in Thurso, Caithness, on the north coast of Scotland in 1936. He went to university in Edinburgh, His degree in civil engineering served him well and one of his first jobs after graduation had him working on the construction of the Forth Road Bridge near Edinburgh as a junior engineer.

As you probably know, the bridge was closed for quite a while at the end of last year due to structural problems and the

family said that it must have decided to go on strike in sympathy with Angus's condition at the time.

Ethel and Angus met at university in Edinburgh and when they got married Ethel made and decorated the wedding cake herself: the main decoration on one layer was the Forth Road Bridge! She had quite an artistic touch.

Angus specialised in highway engineering, taking an MSc in the subject at Birmingham University. The family eventually put down roots in Disley when Angus landed himself a job with Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive. He would then stay there for the rest of his working life, through many developments and changes in the transport industry, including the Beeching review of the railways and the reintroduction of trams to the streets of Manchester.

His final position was Director of Planning and Promotion. He then “managed

IN November I will be stepping down as Groups Coordinator.

I thought that if I started early enough someone would come forward between now and that time to take over from myself. The Groups

WANTED!

Coordinator is often the first point of contact for a U3A member/prospective member with an enquiry to join a group or, in a few cases, an offer to start a

new group. Over the last couple of years New Mills & District U3A has seen the start of several new groups – Fine Art-Printmaking, Current



Angus Munro (in the centre wearing a grey jacket and black trousers) pictured with one of the walking groups in 2012

to secure” redundancy and early retirement at the age of 50 years, which he said was thanks to Margaret Thatcher’s transport deregulation and privatisation of the buses.

As you may know, the game of Bridge was a keen interest of his and a feature throughout his life. It was great that he found bridge clubs and partners to keep it going once Ethel had passed away. It was also good that he managed to get involved

with the U3A at that time: he did enjoy all of the activities and social aspects.

Angus was a very likeable chap and was a member of various groups. Latterly a committee member, he will be fondly remembered by all.

I personally counted eight members of the New Mills and District U3A at the funeral from a total of 50 people.

Dave Farrell

Affairs, Canasta, Financial Discussion and two short courses – First Aid and Pyramid Archaeology. It has been a pleasure to see these groups start as an idea, take shape and now form part of our extensive list of groups available.

Full details of the Groups Coordinator role are available on the website Groups Page. If you want to know more contact me at groupscoordinator@newmillsu3a.org.uk or I am usually at the General

Meetings held on the third Tuesday morning of each month and also at the Coffee Morning at Providence Church, Mellor Road, the last Tuesday morning of each month.

Barbara Morris

Back to school

PHOTOGRAPHY

DURING the summer of 2015 Photogroup 2 was contacted by a local primary school.

They were hoping for help with taking photographs of the children's activities within the school. Two of us visited the school to discuss this and felt that it was something we may be able to help with. After completing all the security checks we were cleared to walk around the school looking for photo opportunities.

As the autumn term progressed we were able to take photographs of classroom activities, individual music lessons, games and playtimes. It was wonderful to be so openly accepted and welcomed by staff and pupils alike and many thanks are due to them for that.

This term the children's joy in designing and building wheeled vehicles has been shared and there are plans to visit clubs and more outdoor activities later on.

Members of the U3A support each other but it's also good to realise that younger generations recognise our skills and invite us to use them.

Christine Wass

One of the children photographed working on a project

CANASTA

THE Canasta Group is now up and running, meeting on the first Wednesday of the month at Footsteps in Whaley Bridge and the third Thursday at the Adult Education Centre in New Mills.

Our group has gradually increased to three/four tables, learning the rules and how to play as we go along.



We laugh at our mistakes and have a lot of fun. The sessions last from 2-4pm with a cuppa in the middle. If you want to join us call me on 01663 745647.

Pam Hartley



OUTINGS



The annual lunch went down very well

OUR U3A Outings Group got off to a good start with the annual buffet lunch at New Mills Golf Club.

It was a full house with the majority of our travellers enjoying a superb meal and lots of catching up with fellow members.

We started this year's travelling last month with another annual event to Boundary Mills where we indulged ourselves in lots of retail therapy.

March finds groups both morning and afternoon meeting in Manchester for a guided tour of the recently reopened Manchester Central Library.

Next month there's a visit to chocolate house, Blackburn, in the morning, which includes a demonstration and tour plus coffee/tea and samples. In the afternoon it's off to Townley House Art Gallery and Museum, Burnley.

The RHS Flower Show trip at Tatton Park is on July 22. £17-£20 depending upon numbers. To get discounted tickets the deadline for payment is April main meeting or before. Coach cost at a later date.

We have lots of ideas in the planning stage for the 2016 programme and look forward to welcoming both regular and new members on the outings.

Pat Cooper and Barbara Matthews

MEDITATION

THE relaxation and meditation group has vacancies for new members, so if you would like to relax and feel a bit more in control of your life this year why not join us?

Led by Margaret we meet on the second and fourth Wednesday mornings at 10am in the small room at Spring Bank Arts Centre.

For more details contact the groups co-ordinator at groupscoordinator@newmillsu3a.org.uk or enquire at the information desk at the general meeting, or even just turn up to a session. First one is FREE!!

Sue Rivers

WEBSITE: www.newmillsu3a.org.uk

Speakers

HERE'S a brief introduction to the speakers for the next three monthly meetings.

Our speaker in April is **Danny Wells**.

Danny is an history enthusiast with a particular interest in the cultural and social history of Victorian England. He lives near Ashbourne and likes to focus his talks on the Derbyshire Dales, Staffordshire Moorlands and London's East End.

His April talk to us is entitled '**The English and Gardening – a social history of an English obsession**'. The talk includes the meanings and symbolism within gardening and flowers, concentrating more on the romance rather than the hard graft of gardening. Danny will focus on Georgian and Victorian Britain in the first half of the 20th century.

David Templeman will be speaking to us again, this time in May. Those who attended previous talks by David will remember how interesting he makes his subjects! This time he is giving us an insight into '**Mary Queen of Scots – The captive Queen 1568-84**'. She spent much of this period in areas local to us, including Chatsworth, Sheffield Castle and Manor Lodge, and Buxton. His talk aims to convey the intrigues, passion, plots and escape attempts made by this fascinating woman.

Terry Jackson is well known to many in New Mills and District U3A as an enthusiast for the history in and around matters concerning The Great War 1914-1918. This year marks the centenary of the



Troubled life ... Mary, Queen of Scots

Battle of the Somme, which started on July 1 and continued for 140 more terrible days. It is particularly poignant that Terry should join us in June, just before the anniversary, to give us a broader perspective on this significant event in our history.

Lesley Thompson

MANY thanks to those of you who have pitched in to this edition of your U3A Newsletter. Email articles and pictures for inclusion in the next edition (July, 2016) to: newsletter@newmillsu3a.org.uk

Please understand that contributions may be edited.

Mike Perry