NEW MILLS and DISTRICT u3a

newsletter

2004 ~ 2024

20th Anniversary Celebrations

Summer 2024
Issue 6

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Executive Committee

The Committee meets regularly on the first Tuesday of the month and is rarely short of items to discuss including those raised by a u3a member. Often an individual query can be resolved quickly by someone on the Committee outside a meeting so please do not hesitate to ask. Seek a member out at a Speaker Meeting or Coffee Morning (check who's who below) or just send an email. There are nine members including Carol Wright and Denise Hall newly elected at the AGM in November and here Carol tells us a little bit about herself.

How long have you lived in New Mills?

Carol Wright

I have lived in New Mills for sixty three years. I come from Northumberland originally but when I got married to a sailor we moved from the North East, brought up our two daughters and I worked in the local hospital until it closed.

What do you appreciate about the u3a?

I can recommend the u3a to anyone who wants to make new friends and join in the variety of activities on offer. I retired twenty one years ago, and have been widowed for fifteen, so joining the u3a opened up the way to joining a range of Activity Groups and consequently meeting a wide circle of members. I have made some very good friends. I was the Speaker Organiser for two years but have now passed on the role to Denise Hall. I joined the Committee this year.

The Executive Committee *(from left to right)*
Sue Rivers; Ann Apps; Margaret Weaver; Pat Stanway; Catherine Ager; Wendy Cheshire; Denise Hall; Jean Windsor; Carol Wright (above)

Chair's Welcome

Hello Everyone

Well Spring made a wonderful display this year with all the new colours and blossom. Then as usual the winds come and blow it all away. My street especially looked like confetti, we are always surprised by it although it happens every time!

But Summer is here and we look forward to another season of events. And as always I would like to give a massive thank you to everyone involved in making sure our u3a runs smoothly throughout the year and I look forward to meeting you all at some point .

Don't forget our Speaker Meetings on the third Tuesday of each month and our increasingly popular Coffee Morning on the last Tuesday. An opportunity to have a chat and catch up with us.

This year as many of you will know is the twentieth anniversary of New Mills and district u3a and we would like to involve all of you in celebrating within your individual groups culminating in our Groups Display in September where we hope to have as many Activity Groups as we can showing off what you have achieved throughout the previous few months.

And a special big thanks must go to Eva Lawson making a celebration cake for the event in September and to the six other members who will be bringing in sweet and savouries for the occasion. We very much look forward to seeing you there!

Sue Rivers (Chair)

When We Were

For the tenth anniversary the Newsletter '***Now We Are Ten'*** highlighted significant events members had enjoyed. Here are just some of them:

- The Photography Group putting on a display of images in the Heritage Centre of all (well almost all) the bridges in the district
- Notable guest Professor Mick Follows from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology joining the Science Group to discuss his research into phytoplankton
- The Craft Group creating a sampler with a square for every u3a group then existing (twenty eight)
- The Outings Group organising a visit to the National Memorial Arboretum near Lichfield
- Partying at the Anniversary Celebration held in August in a marquee on the field next to St George's Hall
- The introduction of a 'Suggestions Box' at monthly meetings

Twenty Years ~ How Did We Get Here?

New Mills and District u3a was established in 2004 and we think the words of the then Chair, Ann Apps, writing in the tenth anniversary Newsletter still ring true today when she said:

"We are members of a popular u3a with a continually growing membership. The success of our u3a reflects both the opportunities it provides us to learn, exercise and socialise, and the self-help nature of our organisation."

The only discernible difference would seem to be the change in typography from U3A to u3a!

In the same Newsletter in a piece entitled *'And it all began with Ethne . . . .'* Hazel Perry, our current Almoner, tells us something about the Founder of the group Ethne Bailey.

"Ethne was contemplating retirement. Having worked in adult education and the community and voluntary sectors she was looking to be involved ***in*** *something based on her experience. The U3A (sic) was attractive to her as it was inclusive and not political or religious."*

Hazel goes on to say:

"Was it worth trying to set up a branch in our area? Ethne, her husband Peter and their neighbour Angela thought it was."

It was always intended that the group should be New Mills and District leaflets were delivered in New Mills, Whaley Bridge and Disley. An initial meeting was held on 27th April 2004 and within eighteen months there were 165 members and 37 interest groups.

And, although in 2024 we have one fewer Activity Groups, our membership is consistently at 500+. Think we can all agree with Hazel's final comment:

"Thank you Ethne, it was all well worth the effort."

And the Chair's wish to 2014 members remains the same for you all in 2024:

"Enjoy our celebratory year, and many successful future years."

This year we will mark the 20th Anniversary at the Group Displays event in the Town Hall on 17th September. There will be refreshments and a celebratory cake. Members held a Summer Party for the ten year event. Opened by Ethne Bailey, there was musical entertainment from Mart Rodger Manchester Jazz. And we suspect some of you will have been there!

Ethne and Peter Bailey in their garden
(*image featured in 10th Anniversary Newsletter*)

Hearing from Activity Groups

Cycling

Meets 3rd Wednesday of the month (weather permitting)

The Cycling Group founded in 2007 meets once per month for leisurely rides of generally 25 to 30 miles in four to six hours including stops. The outings continue throughout the year (weather permitting) mainly on minor roads in Derbyshire, Yorkshire and Cheshire. The group includes some members from other local u3as, with all members being encouraged to lead a ride of their choice if they wish.

We ride at an easy pace and happily wait for stragglers. A mixture of road, touring, hybrid, electric and mountain bikes are used. Coffee and lunch stops ~ picnics in summer ~ are an important part of the day at nice cafes or pubs.

To celebrate the 20th Anniversary our proposed plan is a three counties ride taking in parts of Derbyshire, Cheshire and Staffordshire, circumnavigating Three Shires Head. This will be a hilly ride. The proposed start will be at Derbyshire Bridge at the top of the Goyt Valley and it will work its way round in an anti clockwise direction.

There will be cake at the end for the finishers. I am hoping someone will take some photos so that I can write a report afterwards for the website and a later newsletter.

Ann Apps (Group Leader)
cycling@newmillsu3a.org.uk

Le Club Français

Meets 1st & 3rd Thursday of the month

The French Club is a co-operative organisation. Everyone in the group helps in some way when they can.

We meet twice a month every first and third Thursday at Springbank Arts Centre in New Mills.

We focus on oral communication. It deals with themes and situations that would arise during a visit to France – for example, conversations about family, or the region where you live, arriving at a hotel, visiting the pharmacy or tourist office, daily routine etc.

A variety of resources are used - recorded conversations, songs, newspaper articles, etc. Our goal is certainly to improve our knowledge of the French language but also we want to have fun and enjoy the company of others in the group.

To mark the 20th Anniversary we are planning to watch a French film followed by a buffet lunch.

Dave Wilson (Group Leader)
groupscoordinator@newmillsu3a.org.uk

Shorter Walks

Meets 2nd Tuesday and 4th Friday of the month

The popularity of the Shorter Walks Group means it was fully subscribed, with a waiting list to join. The solution offered, was to organise two walks per month instead of one. The existing meetings on the second Tuesday of each month remained, with an additional meeting on the fourth Friday.

Start time is usually 10:30am, allowing about two hours' activity before enjoying a pub lunch. Conscious of our Carbon footprint, the aim is to make use, wherever possible, of public transport to arrive at and depart from the assembly points – details of which are supplied by email a couple of weeks before each event, with a description of the route and a what3words reference. (A free App for your smartphone.) Others may wish to car share, making their own arrangements.

In response to a call from the Committee, to mark the 20th Anniversary, it has been suggested that various walking groups come together to hold an event which could refresh our appreciation of this splendid area we live in.

That is banding together for a commemorative walk - each group doing a small segment of a larger circuit. The entire 18 mile walk has been checked out to confirm access, terrain and suitable rest and refreshment stops. Also, points at which those wishing to do a short segment, could join or leave the main group.

Preparatory research completed, I circulated the details more widely, in order that it can be determined whether there is any merit in pursuing this idea further. I have asked the leaders of each walking group to poll their members accordingly.

The walk would be in the form of "Beating the Bounds" of New Mills – a tradition from antiquity which involves walking the circuit around the Parish Boundary (about 18 miles in the case of New Mills). Time was, this was done at the Summer Solstice, allowing completion of the circuit between dawn and dusk.

Clearly, this would be a tall order for most of us, and so it is proposed that such an event might be held over a two day period, on Thursday 5th and Friday 6th September, in short segments, so that those interested could do as much – or as little – of the circuit as they felt able to achieve. Parts of the route will be a compromise because of modern day rights of access, some of which have been effaced or obstructed (rightly or wrongly) by current owners of the land involved. All rendezvous points and rest/refreshment stops are accessible by car, and some by public transport.

Roger May (Group Leader)
shorterwalks@newmillsu3a.org.uk

Canasta

Meet 1st & 3rd
ursday of mo

The Canasta Group meets the first third Thursday afternoon of each month at Spring Bank Arts Centre, Spring Bank, New Mills SK22 4BH from 2pm to 4pm.

In celebration of the 20th Anniversary we have booked a table at the Spring Bank Arts Centre and invite anyone who is interested in learning how to play the game to join us.

Kath Garside and Eileen Gillian (Group Leaders)
groupscoordinator@newmillsu3a.org.uk

Editor's Note for those who, like me, are ill informed (and with thanks to Wikipedia) Canasta, Spanish for basket, is a card game of the rummy family of games believed to be a variant of 500 Rum.

Although many variations exist for two, three, five or six players, it is most commonly played by four in two partnerships with two standard decks of cards. Players attempt to make melds of seven cards of the same rank and go out by playing all cards in their hands. It is said to be the most recent card game to have achieved worldwide status as a classic. It encourages strategic thinking and many people find Canasta easier than Bridge, so it might be a good starting point for those who have less experience with card games.

Singing for Fun

Usually Meets
1st Monday of month

We sing unaccompanied usually in 3 or occasionally 4 part harmony. This is not as difficult as it sounds! Our tutor, Rose Hodgson is experienced, enthusiastic and extremely encouraging. She is a trained Natural Voice practitioner and she teaches each part at a pace to suit us and in a very informal way. You will be amazed at what we achieve at the end of each session.

Our repertoire ranges across many genres of music and Rose chooses an interesting cocktail which provides stimulation and challenge. Included are traditional, folk, international, spiritual, blues, lullabies, and some golden oldies - all with a seasonal influence.

The enjoyment between the group and tutor is mutual and between 20 and 30 members attend each time. We have a small but growing section of male singers and would very much welcome some more men. No sheet music, auditions or concerts. It really is just for fun!

Meetings are at the Providence Church on Mellor Road in New Mills. ***For the 20th Anniversary*** we are planning on making a short CD. to showcase some of its Acapello singing.

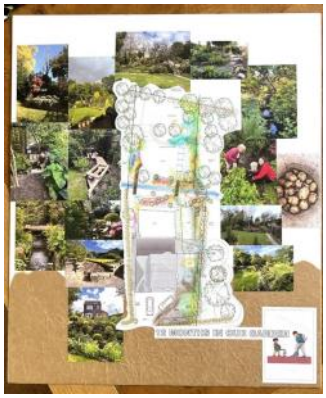
Jo Barber
onewhiteroad@gmail.com

Dave Wilson
davelizwils@gmail.com

Sue Rivers
sue.rivers@talktalk.net

Gardening

Meets 3rd Monday of the month



I took over as Gardening Group Leader in the summer of last year when Eileen Gilligan and Jean Hutton stepped down. They had done a wonderful job of gathering a flourishing group of enthusiastic plants people. For me it was going to be very much a learning curve so we came together in August for an exploratory brain storming session. It was agreed we should continue to meet on the third Monday of the month but at a new time of 2:00pm-4:00pm.

To date we have had a varied programme of events. From visiting Jeanette at The Plant Shop in New Mills; two exceptionally good talks by members ~ Fungi (Steve Doyle) and Twelve Months in our Garden (Paul and Denise Gillingham); a Christmas Wreath Workshop led by Sara owner of Bridgemont Decorative in Whaley Bridge; presentations from Lorna Young at the New Mills Volunteer Centre and Jill Hulme from Nature New Mills. Still to come a guided tour of plants at David Ross in Kettleshulme; member's garden visit; a seed and plant swap.

We are a cheerful group and welcome new members. The benefits of gardening are well documented but just being in a group talking about and looking at the green environment is a lovely way to spend an afternoon. And if you do not wish join a Group but would be happy to come along to pass on your gardening expertise we would love to hear from you. To ***mark the 20th Anniversary*** we hope to plant a tree with an appropriate plaque. Negotiations are currently underway!

Catherine Ager (Group Leader)
gardening@newmillsu3a.org.uk

Photography I

Meets 3rd Monday of the month

The Photography I Group meet on the second Friday of the month from 10am at the Spring Bank Arts Centre. Each meeting is based on an aspect of photography with a practical session or a review of member pictures - topics include: *Summer Landscapes, Holiday Snaps! and Motion & Movement*.

Occasional photostrolls take us into the surrounding countryside, looking for opportunities which may relate to the time of year or merely the myriad of subjects arising from a leisurely stroll. Typically a couple of miles walk then a pub lunch provide ample opportunity for sharing knowledge and swopping ideas.

Whether you're a happy snapper or a more serious photographer, you'll be welcome to join us and share your experiences with an interesting and amusing group of like-minded people.

To celebrate the 20th Anniversary **the Group will produce a bookmark as a commemorative memento for members.**

Cliff Kemp (Group Leader)
groupscoordinator@newmillsu3a.org.uk

Art

Meets Last Monday of the month

The Art Group holds practical sessions in St George's Church Hall on Church Lane in New Mills.

We are a friendly self-help group meeting on the last Monday of the month from 2pm to 4pm.

Parking is available in the small car park, on the road or in the lane opposite by the Football Club.

And to celebrate the 20th Anniversary we will have a show of members' work at the September Group Display event .

Liz Wilson
groupscoordinator@newmillsu3a.org.uk

Country Dance

Meets 1st & 3rd Tuesday of the month

We are an English and International Folk Dancing group meeting on the first and third Tuesday of the month from 3pm to 5pm at the Mechanics Institute in Whaley Bridge.

There is always a nice, happy relaxed atmosphere and everyone is welcome, including beginners, to join us. On Easter Tuesday we all met to dance and enjoyed cake at our tea break.

Ruth Gay and Sally Auld
groupscoordinator@newmillsu3a.org.uk

Cryptic Crossword

Meets 1st & 3rd Monday of the month

Thanks to Liz Wilson for letting us know the Cryptic Crossword Group is up and running again. There are two sessions ~ the first Monday of the month for beginners and the third Monday of the month solving cryptic crosswords.

New members are welcome.

Liz Wilson and Kath Garside (Group Leaders)
groupscoordinator@newmillsu3a.org.uk

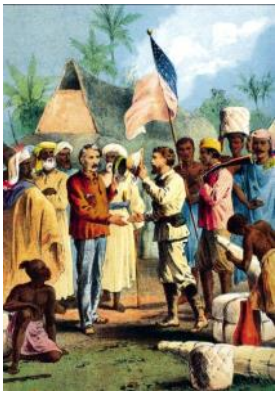
Speaker Meetings

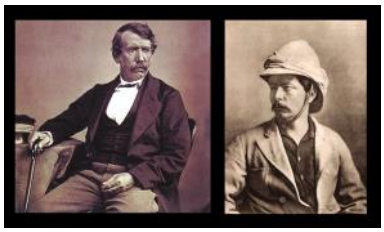
The ever popular Speaker Meetings have always offered an eclectic and interesting programme and thanks must go to Carol Wright, outgoing Organiser, and Denise Hall, who has recently taken on the role, for continuing this tradition.

Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month at 10:30 am at New Mills Town Hall. Current and prospective members are invited and usually a meeting begins with a short business section and refreshments and then a speaker. Seats are available at the front for people with hearing difficulties.

In March we welcomed Fran Sandham, author and lecturer , who told the story behind the legendary meeting in Africa in 1871 between the missing explorer Dr David Livingstone and the ambitious news reporter Henry Morton Stanley.

How their meeting proved to be the newspaper scoop of the century, bringing Stanley world fame and notoriety; the widespread controversy, hostility and personal ridicule Stanley faced on his return to Europe and America after finding Livingstone; why their meeting was such a sensational news story - and why Stanley's four words 'Dr Livingstone, I presume?' became the most famous greeting in history.





Check the Dates *for your* Diary at the end of the Newsletter to find out just what we can look forward to next.

Note there is no Speaker Meeting in September because of the annual Activity Groups' Display.

Jean Windsor, Groups' Coordinator, invites Activity Groups to set up a table, with screens if required, to illustrate through images and objects the kind of things members have enjoyed during the year. This year she will be asking that where possible members include something to show how they marked the 20th anniversary.

And by the way contact Jean if you would like to join or find out more about an existing Activity Group or perhaps set up one of your own.

Gardening and Photography II stands at 2023 Display

17th September 2024 : Special Date *for your* Diary

The Groups Display event, which takes place at the time of the New Mills Festival, is always a wonderful way of promoting the group and our activities to the wider public. It invariably attracts new members too. It is of course an extra special occasion this year celebrating the 20th Anniversary. There will be the Activity Group displays (some highlighting how they marked the event), light refreshments, a celebratory cake, excellent company and that not to be missed opportunity to socialise and chat. See you there!

July ~ December Dates *for your* Diary

Speaker Meetings

16 July
Angela Darlington
The Medieval Hospital in Castleton

15 October
Ellen Outram
The Traditions of Xmas

20 August
Allan Shalks
My Very Unusual Life & My Life in Theatre, Television, Films and Radio

19 November
Annual General Meeting
Yearly reports and elections

17 September
Groups Display & 20th Anniversary Celebration

17 December
Christmas Party
Quizzes and Mince Pies

Coffee Mornings

30 July
27 August
24 September
29 October
26 November
December no Coffee Morning
From 10:30am for conversation and games if you choose (Mah-Jong/Scrabble)

Speaker Meetings
Main Hall of New Mills Town Hall accessed from Aldersgate side entrance. Open to all members and prospective members. 10:30am start.

Coffee Mornings
Providence United Reformed Church
Mellor Road , New Mills
£1 per person for as much tea or coffee and biscuits as you can manage.

Outings

9 July
Chatsworth Gardens
Depart 9am £22

7 August
Trentham Gardens
Depart 9am £22

Check website or contact Coordinators for full details

Please Note: Outings are open to all members on a first come, first serve basis. Payment must be made a month in advance.

Contacts

Speaker Organiser: Denise Hall
speakers@newmillsu3a.org.uk
Coffee Mornings: Sue Rivers
chair@newmillsu3a.org.uk
Outings: Pat Cooper & Barbara Matthews
outings@newmillsu3a.org.uk

A Few Local Events

EXHIBITION

Whaley Bridge Art Group

Find us at:

Whaley Bridge Uniting Church
35a Buxton Road
Whaley Bridge
SK23 7HT

Recognise Anyone?

And finally a copy (above) of the front cover of the 2014 Newsletter 'Now We Are Ten' which featured members' reflections on the first decade of New Mills and District u3a. Wonder if you recognise anyone?

Learning, Laughing, Living

Since 2004

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