

Cheadle and Gatley u3a

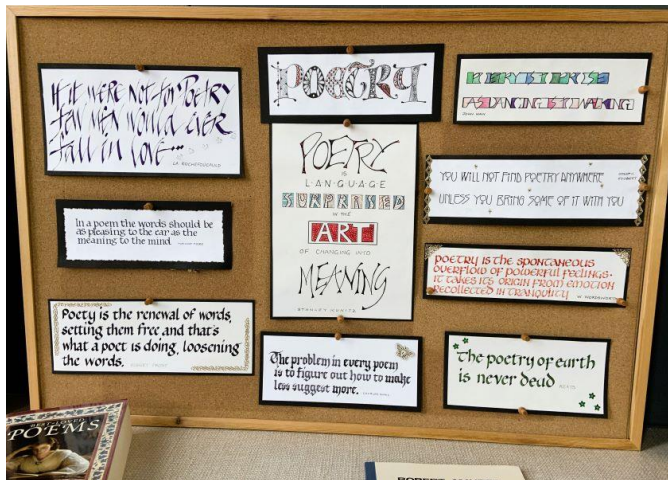
July 2025 Newsletter

The u3a is a national organisation for men and women who are no longer raising a family or working full-time. Cheadle & Gatley u3a has over 200 members who enjoy talks from entertaining speakers, outings, social events, fun and friendship.

We have over 25 activity groups of like-minded people to further your current interests or tempt you into trying something different. Learn, laugh, live!



Beautiful Artwork from the Painting and Drawing group (by Linda Corry, Chris Healey and Pam Allen)



Poetry group at the AGM



Gardening group at Llandudno



Long Walks - towards Mount Famine



Craft group - Embroidery



History of Art group at the Lowry Gallery

Message from the Chair

Margaret Seaby

Thank you to the u3a Executive Committee for all the hard work your officers put in to making our u3a successful. I also want to thank on your behalf all the Interest Group Conveners and their helpers who keep you informed, entertained and engaged both mentally and physically. Most importantly, I would like to thank on your behalf all the helpers who do the meeting and greeting at our monthly meetings, serve the refreshments and do the clearing up afterwards.



Our AGM took place on June 11th at the URC when our formal approval of the 2024 Minutes and the 2025 Financial Statement took place, as well as approval of the re-election of the Executive Committee and the election of Sue Somerville as Trustee. We also voted to select Francis House Hospice, Didsbury as the charity to support for 2025/26. This would be a good place to remind you of the tremendous sum of £1,607.73 that you donated to St Ann's Hospice during the last year 2024/2025. I am sure that Francis House will equally benefit from your generosity.

Enjoy your summer, whatever the weather.

Margaret

Group Convenors display their Group's Activities at the AGM



Cryptic Crossword group



Local History group



Book group 2



Ukulele group



Singing For Pleasure group



Explorers group



Gardening group



Craft group

Monthly Meetings

Heather Wilkinson

Meetings are on the **Second Wednesday: 1:15 for a prompt 1.30 start** (every month except August) at the United Reformed Church Hall, Elm Road, Gatley SK8 4LY.

The monthly open meeting is where to find out about all our activities and visits, to hear speakers talk on a wide range of subjects, as well as a good opportunity to socialise with friends over refreshments.

This year, we have been entertained by speakers talking about Restoring Our Peatlands, My Life in Crime (2), Assassination of President Kennedy, Tales of a Customs Officer and Becoming Mastermind Champion 2022.



Assassination of President Kennedy by Pete Mellor



Restoring Our Peatlands
Izabella Donahue



My Life in Crime (2)
Simon Michael



Becoming Mastermind Champion
Alice Walker

I hope you will find the speakers at our Monthly Meetings for the next 6 months just as interesting! They are:

- | | | |
|----------------------------|--|-----------------------|
| July 9 th | The History of Manchester Theatre (Part 2) | Marilyn Shalks |
| August 13 th | No meeting | |
| September 10 th | Around the World | John Barnard |
| October 8 th | Park Hospital Davyhulme, Birthplace of the NHS | Michael Billington |
| November 12 th | Four Funerals and a Wedding | Catherine Faulkner |
| December 10 th | Christmas celebration to be arranged | |
| January 14 th | Telephone Boxes | Professor Nigel Linge |

GROUP NEWS

Book Group 1

Lesley Witton 428 1522

We didn't meet in January as we felt it was too close to the New Year festivities and it also gave us a bit longer to finish *Howard's End* which we discussed in February most of us having thoroughly enjoyed it. In March we re-visited Alan Bennett. We all enjoyed his satirical humour and close observation. One of our members read *The Uncommon Reader*, about the Queen becoming a user of the local mobile library, and listed the 75 books which are cited in the novel. Our group has actually read many of them, but the list gave us some more ideas.

One of these was Mary Renault, who we chose for April. Three of us read *Fire from Heaven* about Alexander the Great's early life and we all found it well-written and engaging. *The Praise Singer* and *The Mask of Apollo* were two of the other novels read and it was felt that they gave a real insight into life in ancient Greece. A novel set in 1940, *The Charioteer*, had the theme of the conflict in the soul between physical and spiritual love and was admired for its plea for tolerance and understanding and its interesting style.

Books about animals was our theme for May. It was very interesting to hear about a wide range of animals and their complex relationships with humans.

Influenced by the events marking the anniversary of D Day, we chose to read books set around the time of the Second World War for June. Interestingly, the novels chosen all focussed on the effects of war on the lives of individuals in different parts of the world. They were: *The Balkan Trilogy* by Olivia Manning; *The Winds of War* by Herman Wouk; *The English Patient* by Michael Ondaatje; *Ambulance Girls go to War* by Deborah Burrows; *The Secret Keeper* by Kate Morton; *The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society* by Mary Ann Shaffer and Annie Barrows; and *Chastise* by Max Hastings.

If you'd like to widen the scope of your reading, you'd be very welcome to join us.

Book Group 2

Jean Lawrowitsch 428 9678

We read a variety of books selected by the Stockport Library Service, for us to discuss at our meetings on the first Tuesday of the month, 1.30pm at Cheadle Library. They encourage us to read books we haven't considered before. We learn about the different authors and find out interesting facts about their life and work. We also talk about other books we have enjoyed and would recommend. We do have one space in the book group if anyone would like to join us. Recently we have read: *On the Road* by Jack Kerouac, *The Radetzky March* by Joseph Roth, *A legacy of Spies* by John le Carre and currently, *Erebus* by Michael Palin.



Book Group 3

Margaret Seaby 221 0944

Our Book group continues to enjoy our discussions about the books we choose collectively from Stockport Library Service Collections for Groups. Over the past months we have read:

<i>The Anniversary</i>	Laura Marshall
<i>The Whisper Man</i>	Alex North
<i>Lily: A Tale of Revenge</i>	Rose Tremain
<i>Beautiful World, Where Are You?</i>	Sally Rooney
<i>Silas Marner</i>	George Elliot

We welcome new members to join us at 10.30 on the first Monday morning of the month at Cheadle Library Community Room.

Bridge**Linda Ewing 312 5072**

The Bridge group has been running very well. Membership has increased lately and we regularly have four tables. We have all enjoyed the social contact as well as the Bridge.

We are a very friendly group and would welcome any new members. If there were enough beginners wanting to come along, I am sure we could arrange some tuition.

We meet at St James Church Hall on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month at 1.30pm. If you would like to join us, please ring me on the number above.

Anyone who would like to come along for a visit to see what it is like, then just turn up on the day.

**Card Games****Michelle Slater 07710 883579**

The Card Games group has been well attended and we are currently learning to play Canasta. We would welcome more group members, whether they are already card game players or would like to start playing.

Computing**Peter Bayley 282 3468**

This group operates in a low key manner and I have been able to offer advice and assistance to help try and solve those niggly little issues which seem to crop up from time to time, especially with the technology we seem to need to interact with on an almost daily basis. If you need assistance, please call me.

Craft**Pam Allen 971 1880**

We meet monthly on the third Tuesday of the month at 10:30am in a member's home. We work on our own crafts - currently knitting and cross stitch but we have also done crochet, card making and embroidery.

Members will gladly help you with your crafts offering advice on your projects. We stop for tea/coffee and biscuits and there's always plenty of chatting! Please come and join us.

Creative Writing**Nigel Bann 491 6835**

Is there a novel in you? We write stories, poems, reports, anything goes, with 500 to 1,000 words suggested. Each person reads their work out to the group, and the members offer constructive advice and encouragement.

We meet at a member's house on each second Tuesday of the month from 2 to 4 pm. For further information please contact me.

Cryptic Crosswords**Jane Lloyd 07713 84 8734**

Zalo's Café

There are currently eight members in the Cryptic Crosswords group.

We meet at 10:00 on the second Friday of each month, usually in a café in Gatley, but occasionally at one of the member's houses.

As convenor, I provide the crosswords (and the solutions if needed!) and we usually solve three or four puzzles per session.

If you require any further information, please contact me on the above number.

We are not a Coffee Morning but a group of 'Get-up-and-go' people who are all friendly and looking for days out to interesting places, going on holiday with well-planned excursions and getting involved in events. We send out information emails about upcoming activities to our group members, so they can bring their diaries along to our meeting, put their name down on a list and then sit back and enjoy a coffee!

So far, this year has seen the Explorers go on a variety of day trips and a Spring holiday:

February – Winter Warmer

Forty eight members enjoyed a Winter Warmer at Bethany, where a delicious hot pot and yummy cakes were served. Members enjoyed making plans for the coming few months and reminiscing about times past.

March – Stockport Plaza 'Evita'

This trip saw us going back to the group's roots of the Bus Pass group, as the Explorers were formerly known, taking public transport to Stockport and the Plaza theatre to watch Romiley Operatic Society's enthusiastic performance of Evita.

April – Spring Holiday at Eastbourne

We stayed at the Landsdowne Hotel in Eastbourne situated on the seafront almost opposite the Wish Tower, one of seventy four Martello Towers built in the early 1800s to defend against invasion by Napoleon.

On Tuesday morning, we made the journey to Battle and its Norman church and abbey, built by William the Conqueror to mark the site of the 1066 battle against Harold Godwinson. In the afternoon we visited Hastings before travelling to Carr Taylor vineyards where the produce of the vines was sampled, including their cherry wine and ginger wine.

Wednesday was a free day where members took in the local sights in fine weather. Choices included taking a stroll along the pier, enjoying a walk along the promenade past the beautifully maintained flower beds or visiting the town's art gallery. The more adventurous made the short trip to Beachy Head, the highest chalk sea cliffs in England, rising to 530 feet.

Thursday began with the short journey to Alfriston, with its parish church dedicated to St Andrew. The church has Saxon origins, though most of the building dates from the 14th century. Because of its size, it is known as the Cathedral of the South Downs.

After morning coffee and maybe cake, we re-boarded our coach for the journey to Herstmonceux Castle, a 15th Century castle, owned by a Canadian college. We enjoyed lunch before walking around the extensive grounds, including to the folly which looks like a country cottage, but in reality is only a front facade.

April – Pendle Village & Canal Trip

Members enjoyed a day out in East Lancashire, making the short journey to Pendle Village Mill at Brierfield for morning coffee (bacon butties and cake enjoyed by some). There was time for a browse around the varied retail therapy opportunities before continuing to the pickup point on the Leeds Liverpool canal.

A picturesque comfortable cruise along the waterway was enjoyed, with soup and sandwiches being served during the journey. The canal was finally opened in 1816, after taking around 46 years to build. It linked the mill towns of West Yorkshire and East Lancashire to the port of Liverpool allowing for more efficient transport of higher volumes of goods in both directions. Today, the canal is mostly used for leisure activities.



Leeds & Liverpool Canal

May - Llandudno Day Trip (contributed by Nick)

Travelling on a 'shared' modern Bullocks coach on a bright but cloudy morning, our knowledgeable driver announced various places of interest during the journey, including a cliff/rock formation called 'The Old Man of Helsby' at Frodsham, Bodelwyddan Castle (now a Warner Leisure Holiday Site) and Britain's smallest cathedral, St Asaph's.

In Llandudno, the sun was now out and with the Victorian Extravaganza and Transport Festival under way, the streets were quite busy with many being pedestrianised for the holiday events. I caught one of the many vintage buses and had a free ride to the Transport Festival site in Bodafon Fields.

There were perhaps 80 vintage buses on display plus military vehicles, American cars and various steam plant. I browsed the many trade stands selling tools and vehicle parts and assorted miscellany of our agricultural past. There were also plenty of clothing stands, mainly selling 'country' clothing plus the usual food and drink offerings. One food stand was outstanding, selling Sicilian foods (remember Inspector Montalbano!) where I did buy some cannoli.

Back to the town centre via the Promenade, the main street was occupied by various fairground rides and small traction engines were on the side streets, and everyone seemed to be enjoying themselves.

I found my way to the Home Front Museum, located on the hard-to-find New Street and spent an hour and a half immersing myself in the 1940's - very appropriate for VE Day. After that, a quick coffee and then back to the coach for the return home.

June - Afternoon Tea at Bethany Church

Many members of Explorers attended and thoroughly enjoyed the event. Well presented, tasty food with a handy box to take home leftovers and seeing the group's reactions, persuaded the convenor that Explorers should do it again next year.



Afternoon Tea in June 2025

Family History

Linda Corry 428 4094

The Family History Group is a small group which meets in my house off Styal Road. We usually discuss where we have got to in our own research and try to help each other by giving advice. Recently some group members have been giving short presentations to the group about some aspect of family history research.

Currently, as most of us have had our DNA tested, we have been considering DNA matching as a tool for research - and some of us have had success in breaking down 'brick walls', or in confirming that previous research is correct. If anyone is thinking of taking up family history as a hobby but doesn't know where to start, I can help.

The Gardening group meet on the 4th Thursday of the month. We car share from Elm Rd URC or occasionally hire a minibus to go on visits to unusual and beautiful gardens and garden centres where we enjoy gathering inspiration. Then we head to their café for drinks and cake. It's always a grand trip out!

In January, we held our **Annual Quiz** which is always a light-hearted event with teams of 2 and this year was won by Alison and Chrissie. Many thanks go to Heather and Tina for being our quizmasters.

Eleven of us enjoyed the spring bulbs on our leisurely stroll around **Fletcher Moss** in February. Lesley aptly summed up our visit as "Lovely weather, beautiful flowers and great company! What more could you want?"

March saw another fine day as we revisited **RHS Bridgewater** in 3 cars, numbering 6 RHS Members plus 6 guests. We worked our way around the formal gardens to the Head Gardener's Cottage with its display of potted bulbs, over to the Chinese garden and back around to the restaurant for lunch.



Alison and Chrissie win Quiz!



Springtime at Fletcher Moss



RHS Bridgewater in the Sunshine

For April's trip, we hired a minibus to visit **Goldstone Hall Garden** in Market Drayton which describes itself as 'the essence of a quintessential English garden set in 5 acre grounds'. Starting with refreshments on arrival, we had a brief introduction from our guide and were then encouraged to wander through the walled garden with its double tiered herbaceous borders and then on into the extensive kitchen garden that supplies the hotel with fruit and vegetables - a highlight being the apple trees in full blossom.

Next we moved on to Nantwich for lunch at the massive **Bridgemere Garden Centre**, plus we had a couple of hours to explore and purchase plants and products on offer. Sadly, we didn't have time to see the separate RHS Show Gardens so we resolved to return to this another time.

In May, nine of us joined the Bullocks coach trip and had a lovely scenic drive to **Bodnant Gardens** arriving without a hitch. The gardens were in their full glory in brilliant sunshine and were magnificent. There was not enough time to see all the highlights, so another venue that we will definitely return to next year.

We moved on to **Llandudno** where we walked down to the beach, then along the promenade. We then strolled to the end of the pier inspecting all the stalls en route, followed by a lovely tea in a local cafe before heading home.



Double border at Goldstone Hall Garden



Lunch at Bridgemere Garden Centre



Laburnum Arch - Bodnant Gardens

The German class is held every third Tuesday of the month from 10 till 12 at Elm Road. The price is £2 and includes coffee and a biscuit.

We do not have a teacher but take it in turns to prepare and lead a session. The aim is in the first place to improve our spoken German. To achieve this we use games, pictures and role-play. Most lessons also comprise some translation - both ways - and grammar; all in a relaxed, friendly atmosphere.

We are currently deciding which topics to select for the next period from Sept. up to December. This process will be finalised next month.

At our monthly meetings, we have continued the study of World Paintings. We have also explored many aspects of the representation of animals, birds and insects in works of art and our members have contributed to this.

At the beginning of the year, we took bus and train and enjoyed a group visit to Salford Museum and Art Gallery. We were given a curated guide to important paintings and had an opportunity to visit the Harold Riley Exhibition.

Afterwards we toured a Victorian Street before enjoying refreshments in the café.



Salford Art Gallery

In May, our destination was the “Lowry 360 Immersive” and the Modern Life Lowry Exhibition in the adjacent gallery. For 6 unique minutes, we stood amongst the animated matchstick folk ‘Going to the Match’.



An iconic image of L.S.Lowry



Queuing for the ‘Lowry 360 Immersive’

Our meetings are held on the last Wednesday of the month at Elm Road at 1.30pm. Everyone is welcome and no previous knowledge is required.



Monthly Meeting in March

Our meetings for the first half of this year have once again included a variety of formats with member participation, a visit and three interesting speakers.

In February, we shared memories of our grandparents' houses covering all sorts of topics like outside loos, old fashioned cooking ranges, horsehair furniture and odd assortments of ornaments.

We continued our exploration of the history of local religious establishments with a visit in March to the Buddhist temple in Edgeley. This proved to be a most enlightening experience.

We learnt about the restoration of the former church and its conversion into a temple as well as the history of Buddhism and we even enjoyed a brief meditation session. We were made most welcome and were offered soft drinks and cakes!



Buddhist Temple in Edgeley

Martin Davey told us about some of the historic halls in Gatley at our April meeting and in May, we heard about the history of the Avro aviation company. We hope to follow this up with a visit to the Avro Heritage Museum in Woodford in the autumn.

Our speaker in June was the Chair of the Watkin Society who told us about this remarkable family that once lived in Northenden. Did you know that Edward Watkin helped to create Canada in 1867, started a Channel Tunnel and built a railway from Manchester to London? He also bought a painting which remained neglected for a century and was finally sold in New York for £4 million!

In July we will visit Rose Hill Gardens, the site of his former home, and St Wilfrid's church in Northenden, where some of the family are buried.

Painting and Drawing

Pat Marsden 428 7820



Joan Proctor



Janet Davies

We have about ten members who work individually on a variety of subjects using pencil, chalks and paints.

There's an informal and friendly atmosphere but we still work with concentration, seeking inspiration and advice from each other, making it an enjoyable and fruitful experience.

New members are always welcome.



Pat Marsden

Poetry**John Barnard 436 4150**

As one of the tablets on the recent AGM Poetry Exhibit stated '*Poetry is to Prose what Dancing is to Walking*'. It just gives life that dynamic little lift. Certainly this is the feeling within our poetry group, with one member recently saying they thought the following poem describes it perfectly:

*In the fabric of words, diversity we weave.
Each stanza a story for all hearts to believe.
Voices rise like colours, rich and ever bright
In the chorus of life, every shade takes flight.
Echoes of the past merging with the new,
In the rhythm of poems, our truths come into view.
Laughter spills across the pages, sorrow too finds grace,
For in every heartbeat we share this human space.
Bound by the beauty of differences embraced,
Together we create, in this vast sacred place.*

So why not pop along and give it a try - you might just find that inner poet.

Scrabble**Ann Gane 428 0204**

Our Scrabble Group is friendly and non-competitive – although we still try to win! We usually get between four and five at our fortnightly meetings. We can still accommodate new members and would welcome anyone interested in joining us.

Singing for Pleasure**Marjorie Maddison 437 7694**

A welcome from the Singing for Pleasure group who meet each month second and fourth Tuesday being led by our pianist and conductor Barbara Clark. We are a group of u3a members women and men coming together singing songs from all types of music. We have just finished a program of songs associated with Scotland, Ireland, musicals, shows and to begin again with songs selected by the choir.

We would welcome new members women and men to join with us and enjoy coming together to have a pleasurable time just singing for the fun and joy of being together. Looking forward to meeting with you.

Spanish (Intermediate)**Michelle Slater 0771 088 3579**

The Intermediate Spanish group continues to meet on Zoom most Wednesday mornings despite our diminished numbers. We remain a small but committed and enthusiastic group trying to improve our ability to speak and understand basic Spanish using various techniques. Do get in touch if you are interested in joining us.

Theatre Visits**Chris Bester 376 7909**

Forthcoming amateur productions at our local theatres – 2025.

CHADS Theatre Cheadle Hulme 0333 666 3366	<i>QUARTET</i>	Ronald Harwood	Sept 6 th to 13 th
	<i>HOME, I'M DARLING</i>	Laura Wade	Oct 18 th to 25 th
	<i>HANSARD</i>	Simon Woods	Nov 11 th to 15 th
	<i>JEEVES AND WOOSTER IN PERFECT NONSENSE</i>	David and Robert Goodale	Dec 6 th to 13 th
Brookdale Theatre	<i>CALENDAR GIRLS</i>	Tim Firth	Oct 8 th – 11 th
Northenden Players	<i>PRESENT LAUGHTER</i> <i>RULES FOR LIVING</i>	Noel Coward Sam Holcroft	Oct 5 th – 11 th Nov 30 th to Dec 6 th
Garrick Theatre Stockport	<i>BLITHE SPIRIT</i> '1984'	Noel Coward George Orwell	Sept 6 th to 13 th Oct 18 th to 25 th
Heald Green Theatre	<i>EMMA by Jane Austen</i> THE WITCH OF ALDER EDGE	Adapted by Charlie Cook Pantomine by Charlie Cook	Oct 7 th to 11 th Dec 1 st to 7 th

We offer varied walks to suit a range of abilities, mostly 6 miles or so and occasionally up to 8 miles. Car sharing from Gatley Hill House is the normal arrangement. If you would like to join us for fresh air and exercise in marvellous countryside with convivial company, then register your email to receive monthly details of the forthcoming walks, and feel free to come on as many or as few as you wish.

- January: Birch Vale, Sett Valley Trail, Hayfield, Mount Famine, Phoside farm (6½ miles - moderate)
- February: Longdendale circuit of Bottoms, Valehouse & Rhodeswood reservoirs (6 miles - easy)
- March: A circuit in Lyme Park (6 miles - easy)
- April: Along the Dane Valley from the Swettenham Arms (6½ miles - easy)
- May: Furness Vale, Black Hill Edge, Dipping Stone, Peak Forest Canal (6 miles - moderate)
- June: Cancelled due to extreme heat.



Heading towards Mount Famine



Crossing the Dam of Torside Reservoir in Longdendale



Lunch in Lyme Park



The Twemlow (Harry Styles) Railway Viaduct



Enjoying the Dane Valley



Along the Top of Black Hill Edge



At the Dipping Stone

Short Walks

Stuart Forsyth 491 3592

The U3A short walks are led by group members. The walks are approximately 4 miles mostly flat or with a few gentle rises. Recent walks have included Vernon Park and the Goyt Valley.

We meet on the second Thursday of the month at 10:00 outside the URC on Elm Road. Transport to the walks is in our members' cars and if you do not have your own vehicle, there are lifts. Upcoming walks are Werneth Low and Wigan Flash. If you would like to join us, please contact me.



Short Walking group in Goyt Valley

Strollers

Marianne Owen 491 3323

We meet twice a month on the 1st and 3rd Mondays at 10.30 at Elm Road. We usually do an hour's walk in a local park such as Fletcher Moss or Bruntwood. Sometimes we just do a walk from Gatley and occasionally, we take the train or bus to walk a little further afield, but always finish with a coffee and a chat.

New members are always welcome.

Ukulele

Ian Ewing 312 5072

The Ukulele Group meet at St James' Church Hall at 2:00 on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month. There is now a core of 6 players and, having been together for many years, we are now reasonably competent.

There is little left I can teach in the way of technique, so we concentrate on expanding our repertoire which now includes French and Spanish songs and many jazz classics.

We will always welcome new players and I have a couple of spare ukes for absolute beginners. If anyone is interested in joining us please give me a ring.

The group has continued to meet regularly each month during the past year. When we meet, the host for the evening selects the theme and the wines for that month and then costs are shared. In addition, we hold a 'Summer barbecue evening' and a 'Midwinter dinner'.

Although our typical meeting formats have remained largely unchanged, they always prove to be very interesting and lively evenings of animated discussion, coupled with the opportunity to sample a wide range of different wines and also increase our knowledge of various wines. Looking back, the group has now sampled possibly 500 different wines!

The meetings are held in the homes of the group which effectively limits the overall size of the group to the current ten members. However, I believe there is potential within Cheadle and Gatley u3a for the formation of a second wine related group and we would be very happy to assist in the formation of another group.

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### **Music in a Long Life**

I attended the first meeting of Cheadle & Gatley u3a on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2011. Not expecting all that many people on a rainy afternoon in Elm Road Church Hall, I was amazed to find the place almost full. Inspired by the speech of the regional representative, I was one of fifteen who volunteered to lead a group and so began eleven years of 'Singing for Pleasure'.

Before coming to live in Gatley, the Wingard family had spent eleven years teaching in East Africa. Ethiopia in 1951 was in a very poor state. Since the end of the Italian occupation in 1943 not much progress had been made in education; there was only one secondary school in the whole country. Just before our arrival, a new one was opened and that was where we were to teach.

In Addis Ababa, there was a small British and French community which we soon got to know and found some amateur musicians among them. We formed a small choir and as there were no professional concerts, we were often asked to give 'a musical evening'!

Uganda from 1957 – 1962 was totally different with a long established colonial government, a university, a well-established school system, Protestant and Catholic cathedrals and churches and, to our delight, professional concerts. These were part of an artist's tour of Africa, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, then on to South Africa. Amateur music flourished too, with a choir that my husband conducted.



Coming back to the UK because of ageing parents and our children's educational needs, we landed in Manchester in 1962 and moved to Gatley in 1963. What a big change that was in our lives!

Once settled, we felt it was time for us to join a really good choir and so we eventually got into the Hallé choir. To sing the major choral works such as Verdi's Requiem, Elgar's Gerontius and Britten's War Requiem conducted by the great John Barbirolli were musical experiences never to be forgotten. Very special too were the Christmas performances of Handel's Messiah in the Belle Vue circus ring!

Satisfied with work and life in Manchester, we gradually got to know people interested in madrigals. Eight of us used to enjoy participating in the various competitive music festivals, especially those in Buxton, Macclesfield and Alderley Edge and sometimes we came away prizes! All this eventually came to an end as people moved on and had other interests. For me, it was the death of my husband; I could not sing any more so I took up the cello which I had not played for a long time. I find quartet playing most satisfying.

Then came the arrival of Cheadle & Gatley u3a and 'Singing for Pleasure' for eleven years. It has been musically a most rewarding part of my life. Many thanks to you all who sang, and especially to Dorothy whose piano playing was always a great help. You will never be forgotten.

Barbara Wingard

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The Explorers' Story – Do You Remember?

The National Bus Pass scheme was launched in 2008. One day, a small group of friends from the Cheadle and Gatley u3a met informally at Bill's Café in Gatley. We asked ourselves where we could go using our Bus Passes, other than Stockport! Several suggestions were made and we started meeting up at bus stops and set off to various places of interest.

We felt very pleased with the support we were getting and after a meeting at Janet's house, it was decided we should ask to start a Bus Pass group. However, in the recently formed C&G u3a, new activity groups had to demonstrate that they were of educational value and a Bus Pass group was not originally viewed as such.

In early 2016, the Holiday Organiser from Bramhall u3a came to our u3a Monthly Meeting asking if anyone would like to join them for a short break in the Loire Valley visiting 'Chateaux and Vineyards'. Janet Farrell, Pat Ayaydin, Lois Evans and her friend signed up. McCarthy Coaches organised everything and the trip in September 2016 was excellent.

Full of enthusiasm, Pat and Janet chatted about their ideas for running a similar Day Trip group to Mary Fanning and Judith Houghton who quite rightly cautioned us to start small! We then had a meeting with the Bramhall group to see how they were organised and got a taste of 'Going Places beyond the limits of our Bus Pass', yet still in this country. Janet would announce from the front of our Monthly Open Meetings where we were going and invite members to put their names down while getting their drinks.

With other u3a Bus Pass groups being set up across the country, C&G's u3a began to take a broader interpretation of what constituted 'educational value' and our 'Bus Pass and Explorer' group was approved. In early 2017, we had our first 'official' meeting at Bill's café.

Early trips included Etherow Country Park, Southport Flower Show, Poole's Cavern in Buxton, Macclesfield Treacle Market, Well Dressing in Bakewell, Hop-On-Hop-Off Sightseeing in Manchester, Afternoon Tea at Slattery Patisserie & Chocolatier and Christmas lunch at the Hanging Gate - no doubt, you'll remember others.

We also began to organise regular coach trips. One of the earliest was in June 2017 to Llangollen and the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct. Janet recalls that when Blackpool Illuminations was suggested, we heard "no one will want to go there!" but of course they did. Can you recall others? – like the blossom trail with no blossom or the soggy sightseeing day in Buxton!

Brenda Ward organised our first u3a holiday to Bridlington in October 2018, another to Torquay in March 2019 and then one to Swansea in September the same year.

Our group's success continued and in 2021, we became the 'Bus Pass, Day Trips and Holidays' group which soon after changed to the 'Explorers' group, which is now by far the biggest group in our u3a. Our numbers and popularity outgrew each meeting venue and we moved from Bill's Café to St James Church Hall, then to Piccolo's and finally Bethany Church Lounge.

Today's Explorers group still has some of the original Bus Pass friends with Janet continuing to organise interesting Day Trips, and more successful Holidays now organised by Joyce Bradbury. What will be next?

Janet Farrall and Margaret Taylor



Bill's Café 2017



Bethany Church Lounge 2025

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## Memory of Francis House Fundraising

Our chosen Cheadle and Gatley u3a charity this year is the Francis House Children’s Hospice in Didsbury. Francis House was opened in November 1991 by Diana, Princess of Wales. It was originally run by the ‘Rainbow Family Trust’, though later changed its name in 2012 to the ‘Francis House Family Trust’.

Thirty years ago, I organised a charity fundraiser while I was working at Barclays Bank at Radbroke Hall in Knutsford. Staff were able to purchase placemats, coasters and mouse mats made from their children’s artwork and photographs, or buy the ‘Rainbow Family Trust’ mats designed by my 6 year old daughter.

Back then, it was very satisfying to support such a worthy cause and Barclays Community Investment Programme matched the money we raised to donate to Francis House. So I’m extremely happy that our u3a will be supporting them this coming year.

Francis House Children’s Hospice has continued to thrive and expand over the years providing first class respite and end of life care for children and young people with life limiting illness and much needed support for their families.

For more information, visit [francishouse.org.uk](http://francishouse.org.uk).

Hilary Paley



## Your Cheadle and Gatley u3a Committee

|                         |                   |                         |
|-------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Chair                   | Margaret Seaby    | 221 0944                |
| Business Secretary      | Gill Brown        | 491 3623 / 07972 429489 |
| Treasurer               | Linda Louch       | 291 1855                |
| Membership Secretary    | Marian Fahy       | 07914 028502            |
| Speaker Secretary       | Heather Wilkinson | 428 9278                |
| Groups Co-ordinator     | Margaret Seaby    | 221 0944                |
| Catering Co-ordinator   | Elaine Bowker     | 07833 347231            |
| Network Representative  | John Barnard      | 436 4150                |
| Newsletter Co-ordinator | Tina Kelly        | 376 7909                |
| Trustee                 | Sue Somerville    | 07305 311716            |



Gill Brown

Margaret Seaby

Elaine Bowker

Tina Kelly

John Barnard

Linda Louch

Heather Wilkinson

Marian Fahy

## Membership

We would be delighted to welcome any new members to join our Cheadle and Gatley u3a. Please pass this Newsletter on to anyone that you think might be interested. People are welcome to attend one Monthly Open Meeting or one Interest Group meeting as a taster before being required to join.

The fee to join is £12 per year (April to March) pro-rata; i.e. a person joining in September would pay just £7 (for September to March). There is a small charge for each Monthly Open Meeting and often a similar charge for Activity Group meetings to cover room hire or refreshments. Renewals are due each April.

**Note:** According to our national u3a website, there is no minimum age but instead a focus on groups of people no longer in full-time employment or raising a family, to come together and continue their enjoyment of learning subjects of interest to them. Membership queries to Marian Fahy 07914 028502.

## Contacting Our Members

We use email as an important way to communicate with you, so if you change or acquire a new email address, please let one of the Committee know. Then you will not miss out on u3a notices, e.g. about the monthly Open meetings and other useful information. Likewise for phone numbers: as well as your own number, an emergency contact number is requested, in case you should fall ill at a meeting or on a trip out.

## Cheadle and Gatley u3a Website

The link to our website is <https://cheadle-gatley.u3asite.uk/>

Our website is an important link into all our activities. You can find among other things, links to:

- Copies of our newsletters
- Summaries of group activities
- Member application and renewal forms to print
- Documents to help convenors
- Privacy, diversity and safeguarding policies
- New members leaflet
- North West region and National u3a websites with details of courses etc.

## Beacon Online u3a Management System

Our version of this national system enables many aspects of our u3a membership to be managed by our Committee online. Our Group convenors can also use it to maintain their membership list and email their members.

## Note to Convenors

Please give any group activity notices to Gill Brown, our Business Secretary, so they can be displayed at Monthly meetings and emailed to other members. Please notify her if any member has a special birthday, is undergoing serious illness, medical treatment or sad event so that we can send a card as soon as possible.

## North-East Cheshire Network (NECN)

We are part of a regional group of u3as, comprising Bramhall, Cheadle Hulme, Poynton, Macclesfield, Wilmslow and ourselves. These u3as allow some of their groups to be open to fellow members to attend, provided they have evidence of membership of Cheadle and Gatley u3a and pay for attendance at their meeting.

Currently, there are approximately 27 Open groups available to you across the region and these can be accessed via our website at the bottom of the Groups page.

## Note from the Editor:

Many thanks to all who sent in reports, articles and pictures. Remember, it does not have to be the Group Convenor who contributes, so start collecting now for inclusion in your next newsletter!

Please send photos with the largest size possible as low size images produce poor print quality.

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THANK YOU FOR PARKING CONSIDERATELY ON ELM ROAD AND
SURROUNDING STREETS WHEN ATTENDING URC MEETINGS.

DETAILS OF INTEREST GROUPS

If you are interested in setting up a new Group, please contact any member of the Committee.

Our u3a Network Open Groups are shown below in *italics*.

GROUP	CONVENOR	CONTACT	DATES	TIME	VENUE
Book Group 1	Lesley Witton	428 1522	1st Monday	7:30	House
Book Group 2	Jean Lawrowitsch	428 9678	1st Tuesday	1:30-3:00	Cheadle Library
Book Group 3	Margaret Seaby	221 0944	1st Monday	10:30-12:00	Cheadle Library
<i>Bridge</i>	Linda Ewing	312 5072	1st & 3rd Wednesday	1:30	St James' Hall
Card Games	Michelle Slater	07710 883579	4 th Wednesday	1:30	St James' Hall
Computers	Peter Bayley	282 3468	As arranged	Various	House
Craft	Pam Allen	971 1880	3rd Tuesday	10:30-12:00	House
Creative Writing	Nigel Bann	491 6835	2nd Monday	2:00-4:00	House
Cryptic Crosswords	Jane Lloyd	07713 848734	2nd Friday	10.30	Zalo's Cafe
Explorers	Janet Farrall	428 7883	3rd Thursday	9:45-11:45	Bethany Church
Family History	Linda Corry	428 4094	1st Tuesday	9:30	House
Gardening	Deborah Connell	07970 103503	4th Thursday	Various	Various
<i>German</i>	Marianne Owen	491 3323	3rd Tuesday	10:00-11:30	URC Hall
History	John Houghton	428 2892	2nd and 4th Friday	1:30	URC Hall
History of Art	Mary Sharples	428 4901	Last Wednesday	1:30	URC Hall
Local History	Lesley Witton	428 1522	First Wednesday	1:30	Cheadle Library
Painting and Drawing	Pat Marsden	428 7820	1st and 3rd Friday	10:30-12:30	URC Hall
Poetry	John Barnard	436 4150	3rd Monday	1:45	URC Hall
Scrabble	Ann Gane	428 0204	Fridays Fortnightly	2:00	House
<i>Singing for Pleasure</i>	Marjorie Maddison	437 7694	2nd and 4th Tuesday	1:00	URC Hall
Spanish (Intermediate)	Michelle Slater	07710 883579	Wednesdays Weekly	10:00-11:00	On Zoom
Theatre Visits	Chris Bester	376 7909	As arranged	Various	Various
Ukulele	Ian Ewing	312 5072	1st and 3rd Tuesday	2:00	St James' Hall
Walking (Long) (About 6 - 8 miles)	Allan Witton	428 1522	3rd Friday	9:15 - 3.00	Meet at Gatley Hill car park
<i>Walking (Short)</i> (About 4 miles)	Stuart Forsyth	491 3592	2nd Thursday	10:00	Meet at URC
Walking (Strollers) (Easy local walks)	Marianne Owen	491 3323	1st and 3rd Monday	10:30	Meet at URC
Wine Appreciation	Peter Bayley	282 3468	Monthly as arranged	7:00	House