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Check out our website

Registered Charity Number
1168597

Web: www.south-manchester.u3asite.uk



www.facebook.com/groups/807060236097165



Beryl and Wena representing South Manchester u3a at an "Assist" event

April 2026 Newsletter items to: editor.smu3anews@gmail.com

NO LATER than Saturday 21st March 2026

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Quiz Master	Tom Grimshaw		

GENERAL MEETING at DIDSBURY BAPTIST CHURCH

Tuesday 3rd March 2026 at 2.00pm

“Dementia. Can It Be Cured or Prevented?” by Dr. Robert Baldwin

See page 5 for details

Parking at Didsbury Baptist Church - Would members please note that there is no parking at the church with the exception of temporary drop-off for the catering team. (Blue Badge holders could use double yellow lines)



Message from the Chair

Friends, Romans, Countrymen, lend me your ears. Oh sorry, I am rehearsing several plays at the moment so, I have lines whizzing round my brain. I should say: -

Dear Members,

It is spring, flowers and trees are coming alive with blossom and buds, the grass needs cutting (groan) and weeds need attacking . (I am not ready for that battle yet). Life is busy and why not!

I am glad we have so many groups to keep us busy. I recently met some newly retired people and it was good to tell them about this organisation and to offer them a purpose to being over 65.

Groups are the hub of our movement. Face to face or on Zoom, our groups keep people connected, which is so important today. As I watch people talking about their groups, it is so good to hear their enthusiasm and animation about their subject. Once again, thank you, group leaders for your skills and planning.

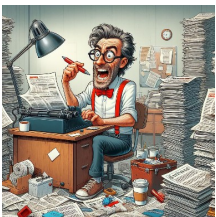
In February the Anglo Saxon group went to Liverpool to see artifacts and listen to a talk from the curator. This month we are going to Gorton Monastery, arranged by Jill Evans. It will be a great day out. I hope many of you are coming.

This month also sees our AGM. I would love to see more people standing for the committee as we need places filled. If we do not have enough members on the committee, we will have to cease as a u3a organisation. So, I urge you to think deeply, take a good breath and why not put yourself forward? It is not arduous and the more people serving on committee, the more we can achieve. We need you.

Well, I'd better get back to line learning. Parting is such sweet sorrow. Oh sorry! Cheers.

Beryl.

P.S. I am trying to get more copies of The Life Book from Age UK but so far not getting very far. Watch this space.!



Message from the Editor

If you have an article or interesting story that you can submit for the newsletter which our readers might find enjoyable, I would be very grateful. The story could be about something which you have done with the u3a or it could be totally non-u3a related. Perhaps something you did on holiday, some interesting place which you have visited or something to do with your hobby.

Please email me: editor.smu3anews@gmail.com

NATIONAL AND NORTH WEST NEWS

National: www.u3a.org.uk for latest news of u3a around the country and courses/events on offer.

National Newsletter: February newsletter can be found here [February National Newsletter](#)

North West Region: <https://northwestregion.u3asite.uk/> for the latest information and newsletter

SOUTH MANCHESTER u3a NEWS

SMu3a welcomes the following new members

John Batty	Bernard Lisewski	Sue Packer	Amanda Burgess
Eileen Conneely	Jane Yianni	Sylvia Giness	Paul McHugh
Catherine Head	Elizabeth Bartosz	Collette Booth	Joe Sheppard
Sanjay Shah	Veronica Robertson	Carol Ann Hill	Carol Hackward
Pamela Smith	Shirley Kedian	Patricia McCollin	Steve McCollin
Bernice Hyman	Ora Ioannides	Frances Bannister	Kevin Laitak
Jan Lancaster	Jennifer Tonge	Sue Tucker	Michael Tucker
Louise Mitchell	Robert Baldwin		

South Manchester u3a General Meeting Speakers

Tuesday 3rd March 2026 at 2.15pm	“Dementia. Can It Be Cured or Prevented?” by Dr. Robert Baldwin
Tuesday 7th April 2026 at 2pm	“My Life of Crime” by Simon Michael
Tuesday 5th May 2026 at 2pm	“All at Sea” by Mark Llewellyn
Tuesday 2nd June 2026 at 2pm	“Osteopathy” by Jennifer Emmott
Tuesday 7th July 2026 at 2pm	“The Lost Buildings of Manchester” by Jonathan Schofield
Tuesday 4th August 2026 at 2pm	“Centenarian Lady Hires Buff Butler” by Paul Isherwood
Tuesday 1st September 2026 at 2pm	“My Life in Broadcasting” by Roger Johnson
Tuesday 6th October 2026 at 2pm	“Great Forgers” by Jim Williams
Tuesday 3rd November 2026 at 2pm	“My Life and Challenges” by Dr. Carl Austin-Behan OBE DL
Tuesday 1st December 2026 at 2pm	A Performance by the SMu3a Ukulele Orchestra followed by a Christmas Quiz hosted by Tom Grimshaw
Tuesday 5th January 2027 at 2pm	“The Story of Pyrex” by Dr. Diana M Leitch MBE
Tuesday 2nd February 2027 at 2pm	“Underground Manchester” by Keith Warrender
Tuesday 2nd March 2027 at 2.15pm	Piano Recital by Andrew Wilde
Tuesday 6th April 2027 at 2pm	“The Work of Age UK” by Sharon Boswell

South Manchester u3a September General Meeting

Tuesday 3rd March 2026 at 2.15pm

At Didsbury Baptist Church, School Lane

“Dementia. Can It Be Cured or Prevented?” by Dr. Robert Baldwin



Dr. Robert Baldwin is a medical professional and academic researcher with the Manchester Mental Health and Social Care Trust. He also has affiliations with the Manchester Royal Infirmary and the University of Manchester. He specialises in stroke and elderly care medicine which includes dementia.



OUR AGM IS THIS MONTH WHEN WE WILL BE VOTING FOR A NEW COMMITTEE

There are a number of vacant roles which need to be filled.

Would you be willing and able to step up and take one of these roles on?

Full support will be given.

TREASURER

We require someone who can look after our money. It needs someone who is computer-literate, organised and good with numbers. No formal financial experience is needed.

EVENTS COORDINATOR

Someone who can liaise with outside organisations with whom SMu3a can display a stand to help raise our profile. You will be a good communicator.

OUTINGS ORGANISER

Someone to organise visits and outings for interested members. You will be a good communicator and well organised.

For more information, contact our secretary on: smu3a.secretary@gmail.com



COFFEE AFTERNOON

Thursday 19th March 2026 at 2pm

Didsbury Baptist Church

Come along and enjoy a free tea or coffee together with a nice biscuit and a good chat!

For more information, contact Andrew: smu3a.secretary@gmail.com

We are proud to present the finalists for the u3a short story competition 2025-26. These top 14 stories were chosen from 525 entries - our highest number ever!

We are delighted to announce the overall winner as **Janet from Woking Area u3a** in the South East with her story 'Woman in the tree walk'. Second place goes to **Sarah from Hartley Witney u3a** in the South East with her story 'Finding the key to lost memories' and 3rd place goes to **Christina from Guernsey u3a** in the South East for her story 'Little boy lost'.

All 14 of our finalists receive a copy of the Writers' and Artists' Yearbook, edited by Alysoun Owen and published by Bloomsbury. First, second and third places will also receive a signed copy of The Ultimate Guide to Editing Your Novel by Sara Grant. The winner will receive three additional titles from Bloomsbury.

Our very own South Manchester member, **Jean Thompson**, is proud to be one of the 14 shortlisted entries. There was an event on Zoom on 29th January for all shortlisted writers when the first three finalists were announced, and they were able to hear their stories read aloud. All three were very well written and their success well deserved.

You can read some of their stories on the u3a website here: -

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/what-we-do/learning/learning-activities/short-story-competition-2025>



On 22nd January, Wena Stephenson and I attended an exhibition for older people arranged by Assist in Withington Methodist church. The exhibition gave elderly people help and ideas on how to survive in winter and beyond.



It started at 11am and we were busy talking about our u3a from the start. We put up our usual exhibits and had many conversations. Quite a few people took forms and said that they wanted to join. Half way through the day hunger set in and we were drawn to the excellent free buffet and copious coffee to help wet our sore throats.

There were many stalls there to help older people including the police giving out door alarms and door bells, Age UK and a group offering to install energy saving bulbs, free of charge. I had them to my house a week later and they did a great job for me. There was also an excellent singer and a drumming group.

For us it was a fruitful time and a pleasant way to spend a day advertising our u3a. Thank you Barbara for inviting us.

Beryl Cowen

If you have any information about members' special birthdays, anniversaries, illness, bereavements, etc. please notify Kath Thompson on

Tradesperson Book

Is available at general meetings. It will only be of value if members use it, so please do.

ANGLO SAXON GROUP VISIT TO LIVERPOOL

Scouse, Coffee and Historical Artefacts



That sums up a visit to Liverpool Albert Dock museum on Feb 12th by some of the Anglo Saxon group. We arrived by train in time to sample Scouse. If you have never eaten it, I highly recommend it. Lamb, beef and vegetables in a rich sauce. Delicious! After lunch we had a fascinating talk by the curator as we travelled through a history of treasures including Bronze Age and Anglo Saxon finds that were discovered in Wales and the North West. The diversity was amazing and the craftsmanship superb. There is no such historical period as The Dark Ages. One brooch was found a few years ago by a Salford school when a teacher was having a walk near the school. It is medieval and absolutely beautiful!

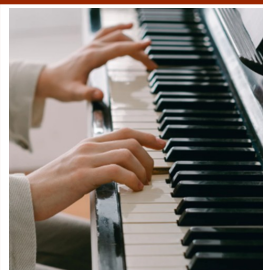


We also were warned not to become metal detectorists without permits and not to steal any finds. There is waste ground near me. Anyone got a metal detector that I can borrow?



Beryl Cowen

PIANO GROUP



The Piano Group has now been meeting for a year in various members' homes. From this month we will be moving to Didsbury Baptist Church so that we can enjoy the grand piano there, and have space for more members. There are six of us in the group now, and it is becoming quite difficult to squeeze ourselves into people's living rooms, especially when they also contain pianos.

We have discussed the challenges of learning and practising the piano, whether long ago as children or more recently as adults, and it has been really interesting to compare our different approaches and experiences. We've talked about what the piano means to us; mental stimulation, relaxation, a way of expressing ourselves, and more. Our group aims to find ways of sharing what can sometimes be the rather solitary experience of playing the piano. So we play for each other as well, sharing what are often works in progress and working to overcome the inevitable anxiety inherent in playing in front of others. I find it helps to see it as sharing rather than performing, and to accept that mistakes are part of the learning process!

We are a friendly group, and we welcome new members, whether they're quite new to the piano or learned it years ago, maybe picking it up again in retirement. And all kinds of music are welcome too. We have a good collection of sheet music resources between us which we're happy to share.

Please get in touch if you would like to know more.

Hilary Taylor

Winter Gardening

By Frances Kelly

Has your garden looked grey these last three months? Fed up with that? Well spring is coming soon, but plan now for next winter.

What will give you colour or scent in the winter depends a bit on your garden: How big is it? Does it receive at least a little sun during the darkest days of December? But even if not, there are plants to give you colour. I have only a medium-sized garden in total, back and front, but these are the ones I have:

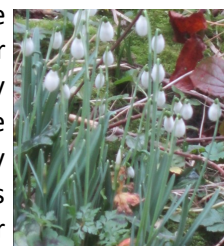
Dogwood (*Cornus*) stems will give you colour throughout the winter without flowers. Plant where it catches a bit of winter sun and the shoots glow. My favourites are *C. Siberica* (deep red) and 'Midwinter Fire' but you can get them black- or green-stemmed. Just trim it back each spring and simply plant the trimmings in a pot to make more plants that you can give away.

Do you like fruit? Japanese Wineberry is decorative in summer, producing masses of gorgeous raspberry-like berries, but in winter it is the autumn-grown long stems that catch the eye: a glowing red.



The Winter Flowering Honeysuckle, unlike its summer cousins, is a bush and needs a bit of room to spread. But plant it near the kitchen door or a path and its masses of tiny cream and white flowers will catch you with its scent from early December through to March. (It is a bit dull for the rest of the year, so I grow a clematis through it).

Next up, just after the solstice, are the snowdrops. These can fit in the smallest spaces and will grow under bushes or trees that drop their leaves in winter. By the time the leaves cast full shade again, the snowdrops are dormant. They are cheap too. Simply ask a friend who has them to give you a clump, while they still have the leaves but after flowering. Plant them quickly and they will surprise you next spring and slowly spread. Did you know that you can use them as a guide to the temperature outside? The flowers stay closed below 5°C but open above that temperature. This is the same temperature as winter-flying bees fly. (Yes, they exist).



In early January the Witch Hazel (*Hamamelis*) opens. I prefer the yellow *H. Mollis*, with its beautiful scent, but there are others. I also have Jelena (red) and there are orange ones and a mass of shades in between. Like the snowdrops, this provides food for winter-flying insects, which are surprising in number and variety in our mild climate. Witch Hazel flowers (properly Wych or 'bendy' Hazel), will last until late February or early March.

In an area of the garden which is pretty shady in summer, the many colours of the Hellebores begin to show. (Some people have even earlier varieties).



And then in February, the early flowering Iris suddenly poke their heads above the ground. A glowing blue/yellow or purple and yellow. The tiny purple Cyclamen coum can be seen below the rose, and the first early daffs begin to open. In the south-facing front garden, (with some



fleece as cover on really cold nights), the Mimosa (*Acacia dealbata*), and the Daphne (both, again, with a lovely scent), are looking wonderful at the moment alongside the deep pink Pussy Willow 'Mount Aso'. Winter isn't over, but early spring has begun and the two seasons will play hokey-cokey for the next few weeks as the days get longer.



So, plan now for what you want next winter!

CONCERTS AT EMMANUEL CHURCH IN DIDSBURY



How lucky we are to have this venue on our doorstep!

On a freezing evening in February I went to a concert by members of the Rustavi Ensemble: seven powerful male voices singing a wide range of music from different parts of (ex-Soviet) Georgia. They stood tall and straight, strikingly dressed in long black embroidered coats, knee-length black leather boots and with half-metre swords at their waists. Some songs used full-throated, almost rasping, voices and non-Western harmonies from centuries-old traditions.

Then by contrast would come something as sweet and soft as a lullaby, a high-voiced solo accompanied by long held bass notes. They sang from memory, in perfect harmony, with just the slightest hand gesture to round off a final note. A rare chance to hear sounds from another world.

The very next morning was a total contrast: a concert by members of the Pleyel Ensemble, who come to Emmanuel about once a month. As part of their 'Schubert Plus!' series, they presented a glorious late work of his, 'Auf dem Strom' ('On the River'), for the unusual combination of singer, horn and piano, with world-renowned tenor Toby Spence as guest artist. This was complemented by the world première of a specially commissioned work from composer Tim Jackson (principal horn player with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra): a beautiful and moving setting of Keats' poem 'To Autumn', received with enthusiastic applause. After some more Schubert songs with words by Goethe, the concert ended with a rich and sonorous trio for violin, horn and piano by Brahms.

The Emmanuel Coffee Concerts take place at 11am most Saturdays and often feature talented student musicians from the Royal Northern College of Music: another institution we are fortunate to have just up the road from south Manchester.



Helen Nicolson

DRAMATIC READERS GROUP



This month sees the relaunch of this group. The original group folded during the Covid pandemic. Dramatic readers will restart at The Northern Tennis club at 2pm on Friday 20th March 2026 and every 3rd Friday of the month after that.

The Northern Tennis club is a new venue for us and is on the corner of Lapwing Lane and Palatine Road. It is all on one level, has a good-sized carpark and is close to tram and bus routes.

If you like plays, both light-hearted and serious, and becoming a character, please come along to read in a part and have some fun doing it. The first session will also be a discussion of what to read but we will read a play as well. See you there.

Beryl Cowen



Book your place at u3a Festival 26

Join us for u3a Festival 26, taking place at the University of York between 1-3 July, for a three-day celebration of fun, learning and the community that makes u3a so special.

Explore an existing interest or take the leap and try something completely new in member-led workshops and sessions. Surrounded by other members, you will have opportunities to move your body, be creative and explore new ideas.

The University of York has a beautiful campus with green spaces and a lake, fantastic sports facilities, lecture halls, and workshop rooms – the perfect backdrop for three days of inspiration and learning. There’s on-site accommodation available too so you can go straight from breakfast to your first workshop.



Here’s a little bit of what you can expect at the Festival: -

- Talks on a wide range of subjects
- Hands-on crafts and art workshops
- Fitness workshops
- Sports tournaments
- Live performances by u3a musical groups
- The opportunity to make music yourself



We can’t wait to welcome you. Tickets cost £18 a day, or £50 for a three-day ticket. The festival starts at 11am on Wednesday 1 July and ends at 3pm on Friday 3 July.

For more information and to book your tickets and accommodation, go to the u3a website here: - <https://mailchi.mp/u3a/u3a-festival-26-ticket-release?e=39695032a5>



WEST DIDSBURY ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

EVERYONE WELCOME - FROM COMPLETE BEGINNER TO EXPERIENCED ASTRONOMER

Monday 9th March 2026 at 7pm

“From Telstar to Starlink – Evolution of the Telecommunications Satellite” by Nigel Linge

Monday 13th April 2026 at 7pm

“Exploring the Invisible Cosmos through Island Universes” by Jeni Millard

As usual, meetings take place at Nazarene Theological College. Visitors welcome.

For more details visit www.wdas2.com.



invite applications for the 2026 Residential Summer School

Tues 11th August – Friday 14th August 2026

At Manchester Metropolitan University, M15 6GX

The Metropolitan University is located in the centre of Manchester and less than 20 minutes' walk from Oxford Road Railway Station. The campus has modern facilities, student en-suite rooms with Wi-Fi access. There will be a quiz on the first evening and a "Gala Dinner" on the third and final evening. Speakers will also attend on the second and third evening.

Full Board Residential Delegate; £430. (+£15 car parking charge if applicable;)

We include full board for 3 nights, including dinner on 11th August, breakfast, lunch and dinner on 12th August, breakfast, lunch and Gala Dinner on 13th August, and breakfast on 14th August.

Also, tea and coffee refreshments on each day.

Non-Residential Day Delegate: £215 (+£15 car parking charge if applicable)

This includes lunches, teas and coffees, excludes breakfast daily and dinner on Tuesday and Wednesday but does include the Gala Dinner on 13th August.

Accommodation is available nearby in the Manchester city centre.

An application form available online at: <https://northwestregion.u3asite.uk/summer-school-2026/>

It must be completed by post or email, Payment can be either by bank transfer (North West Region of u3as, Lloyds Bank sort code 30-90-16, account 00197002 quoting name and post code) or by cheque (payable to North West Region of u3as)

£100 Deposit (£50 non-residents)

Balance by 11 May 2026

Queries should be directed to Alan Hough or Neill Stewart at:

The 8 courses on offer are: -

Archaeology Explorers

Making sense of everyday Mathematics

An introduction to Geology

Photography - Beyond the Snapshot

Art challenges - the history of colour

The UK and USA Political Scenes

Operatunity – opera appreciation

Intermediary Ukulele

**THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
OF SOUTH MANCHESTER U3A
3rd MARCH 2026, 2.00 PM
VENUE: DIDSBURY BAPTIST CHURCH,
BEAVER ROAD, DIDSBURY**

A G E N D A

1. Welcome.
2. Apologies for absence.
3. Minutes of the AGM held on 4th March 2025 (see below).
4. Matters arising from the minutes of the AGM held on 4th March 2025.
5. Report from the Chair.
6. Treasurer's Report and presentation of accounts for the year ended 31st December 2025.
7. To authorise the appointment of an independent examiner of the accounts for 2026.
8. The election of members of the Committee.
9. Any other business notified to the Chair/Secretary by Friday 20th February 2026.
10. Close of AGM.



**TREASURER'S REPORT
2025 ACCOUNTS**



We had a good year in 2025, making a profit of £1,453. This figure is larger than it should be because there was one outstanding invoice of £300 for the Christmas lunch venue hire. We also had a large number of people paying their 2026 membership subscriptions early (thank you for that), totalling £400. Therefore the adjusted profit for 2026 is £453. This is still a healthy figure.

Our member numbers were well up on 2024, giving us a larger income from subscriptions. Also, the number of active groups was larger than 2024, giving a larger groups' income but this was offset by greater venue hire costs.

Overall, this was a good year with our reserves continuing to grow. This means that, despite rising costs, we should be able to hold our membership subscription cost for a good few more years.

Ian Burn

Treasurer

South Manchester u3a

Income and Expenditure Statement 31st December 2025

CURRENT ACCOUNT

2025

Income

Subscriptions	£ 8,383.76
Monthly Meetings	£ 875.00
Groups	£ 11,807.15
Sale of u3a Goods	£ -
Miscellaneous	£ -
Donations	£ -
Christmas Meal	£ 1,623.04
	<u>£ 22,688.95</u>

Expenditure

Monthly Meeting	£ 823.47
Venues	£ 11,516.78
Groups	£ 333.49
Speakers	£ 800.00
Printing/Stationery	£ 1,812.39
Catering	£ 138.90
Equipment	£ 28.49
Welfare Expenses	£ 36.03
National Member Subscriptions	£ 1,956.00
TAM Magazine Costs	£ 1,837.28
Miscellaneous	£ 60.00
Publicity/Marketing	£ 315.00
HQ Licences	£ 50.00
Purchase of u3a Goods	£ -
National Conference	£ -
Bank Charges	£ 49.20
Christmas Meal	£ 1,478.53
	<u>£ 21,235.56</u>

Surplus/Deficit for 12 months

Balance at 1st January 2025	£ 10,130.37
Received to Date	£ 22,688.95
Paid to Date	<u>£ 21,235.56</u>
Balance at 31st December 2025	<u>£ 11,583.76</u>

Bank Statement at 31st December 2025

Unpresented Cheques	£ 11,583.76
	£ -
	<u>£ 11,583.76</u>

EXAMINERS REPORT

I certify that the above summary of receipts and payments relating to the calendar year stated is fully supported by the vouchers supplied to me and relevant information and explanations given.

Signature:

Anderson 16/1/26

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

OF SOUTH MANCHESTER U3A

4th March 2025 14:00 p.m.

Didsbury Baptist Church

Minutes

1. Welcome – The Vice Chair welcomed everyone to the AGM and thanked members for attending. She reported that the Chair was recovering from her recent illness.
2. Present – 95 members and 0 proxy votes.
3. Apologies for absence – Beryl Cowen, Jill Evans, Michael Evans.
4. Minutes of the AGM of 5th March 2024 – accepted as correct by the meeting.
5. Matters arising from the minutes of the AGM of 5th March 2024 – none.
6. Report from the Chair. The Vice Chair read out a report from the Chair. 2024 was a successful year with membership growing to more than 540 members. Several new groups have started. All those who work for the u3a in many roles were thanked for their efforts. Helen Chambers was thanked for her work on the committee as she has now resigned. Diana Bradley was thanked for her 12 years running the creative writing group as she is also retiring. Members were reminded that the Summer School is taking place in Manchester this year with many interesting activities on offer.
7. Treasurer’s report for the year ended 31st December 2024. This had been published in the newsletter. There was a small deficit of £116 in 2024. Approximately £800 had been spent on publicity. Higher membership numbers led to new groups with associated costs for venues but also increased income. More members and groups are to be welcomed as this is what u3a is about.
8. Authorisation of appointment of an independent examiner of the accounts for 2025. The meeting approved the appointment of Jose Anderson.
9. Election of the committee. Nine members had been nominated and were elected unopposed. These were Andrew Bradbury, Ian Burn, Beryl Cowen, Patricia Ford, Pamela Smith, Alwena Stevenson, Diane Ward, Elizabeth Williams and Joanie Yoffe.
10. Any other business – none.

The meeting closed at 14.10.



Didsbury Probus Programme 2026

Didsbury and District Probus Group meet on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month. Unlike many Probus clubs, we are a mixed group of men and women. Annual membership is £40.

Thursday 5th March 2026

"Don't Shoot the Messenger" by Frank Vigon

This is an Entertaining talk about the history of advertising and how advertising works.

There are many subtleties in the use of promoting a commodity, some so subtle you never know they exist.

Frank will give his very enthusiastic and enlightening talk with his usual passion, come and listen.

Thursday 19th March 2026

"Alan Turing - His Life and Legacy." by Neil Sheldon

Alan was a brilliant young man who was recognised for his important work at Bletchley Park on the decoding of the Enigma machine. After the war he came to Manchester and worked at the University until his death. Neil's presentation covers all the trials tribulations and successes of his life.

All meetings are held in the Didsbury Baptist Church, School Lane, opposite the Scout Hut and Didsbury Metrolink station.

Tea/coffee and biscuits are served from 10.30am before the talk at 11am.

ALTRINCHAM CHORAL SOCIETY

www.altrinchamchoral.co.uk

BRAHMS REQUIEM

Saturday 11th April 2026 7.30pm - 10.30pm

St George's Church, Altrincham

The German Requiem of Johannes Brahms is acknowledged as one of the great choral works of the Romantic era. Although originally scored for symphony orchestra, Brahms made a version for piano duet. Join us in St. George's Church, Altrincham for this amazing choral piece with the Scott Brothers piano duo. Also performing are soloists, Juliet Montgomery (soprano) and Aidan Edwards (baritone).

Tickets are £15 from www.altrinchamchoral.co.uk or on the door.



Opera at Menorah

Opera for All and Menorah Synagogue

Opera Appreciation with Diana Rosenthal

All events are on Thursdays at 1.30pm

£10 per performance, paid at the door using card payment

Menorah Synagogue, 198 Altrincham Road, Wythenshawe, Manchester, M22 4RZ

Go to <https://menorah.org.uk/opera/> for more information

26th March 2026

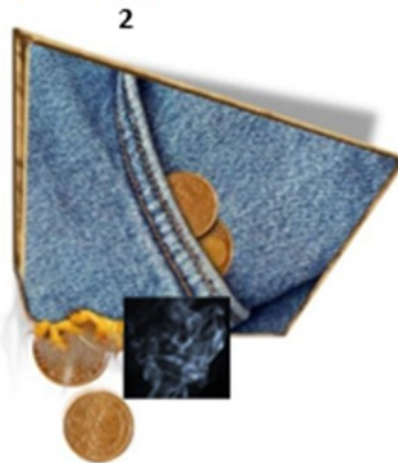


SAMSON ET DALILA (Saint-Saëns)

When Samson falls in love with Dalila, his strength, both physical and spiritual, is put to the test. This biblical epic opera is characterised by the composer's vivid, emotional insights and orchestral brilliance.

REBUS QUIZ

Identify these everyday phrases



3

Issue	Issue	Issue
Issue	Issue	Issue
Issue	Issue	Issue
Issue		



6

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ANSWERS ON PAGE 20

Walking for Health Group 2 Walk - Wednesday 11th March 2026

Cheadle Hulme to Cheadle

A 3-mile walk from Cheadle Hulme to Cheadle on the Ladybrook Valley Interest Trail. Mostly good level paths but could be muddy in places. Wear suitable shoes or boots, bring a wet coat and a bus pass if you have one. Meet at Stockport Interchange by information office at 10.25. Lunch available at the Ashlea pub in Cheadle. If you want to come, phone Anne Clarke



Walking for Health Group 1 Walk - Tuesday 31st March 2026

Dinting to Broadbottom

A 3.5-mile walk on good tracks and roads. May be muddy in places. Very hilly with a steep downhill at the start and a long steep uphill midway. No stiles. Some steps. Meet at Piccadilly Station concourse near Platform 2 at 10:15. A lunch is available at Lymefield Garden Centre in Broadbottom. If you want to come, phone Ian Burn

Magicians

I went to school for magicians, but I failed the final exam. Turns out, they were all trick questions.

Walking for Health Group 1 – Tuesday 27th January 2026

Alkrington Woods Nature Reserve



Our January walk threatened to be a wet one when we got up first thing. It was wet and windy but, by the time we all met up at Victoria station, the rain had stopped and the wind died down. A bus journey took us to Middleton where our walk began. We entered the Alkrington Woods Nature Reserve for a meander around the woods.

The land was originally owned by Adam de Prestwich in the 13th century. It passed through several hands until it was eventually bought by the Lever family in the 1600's. The family later went on to make their fortune in soap. There was a hall on the site at that time but it was demolished and the current Alkrington Hall was built in 1735 with a Giacomo Leoni design for Darcy Lever. Leoni was also responsible for the current design of Lyme Hall in Disley. The Hall came into the possession of the local council when the Lever family line died out. It was later converted into 4 luxury apartments.

After our photo call, we crossed the Lever bridge, built in 1636 by Robert Lever, and believed to be the oldest bridge in the area. This eventually took us to a series of ponds which are rich in wildlife today, but were actually created to feed the calico print works and dye factories along the river Irk. The ponds and the Irk would have been black with pollution and very smelly! A long loop took us back to the Lever bridge where we climbed the hill up to Alkrington Hall for a beautiful view out over Oldham and Middleton. Onwards then to our lunch stop at the Lancashire Fold which was greatly enjoyed by all.

SMu3a Groups A-Z LIST

Check Group News and this month's diary. Contact Group Leader before attending.

ANGLO SAXON AND MEDIEVAL HISTORY	Meetings are on the 1st and 3rd Mondays of the month at 10.30 via Zoom. This group covers all aspects of Anglo Saxon and Viking life in depth through language and social history readings and discussions. Beryl Cowen
ART APPRECIATION	Monthly meetings held at Didsbury Parsonage on the afternoon of the third Wednesday of the month cover a wide variety of artistic topics. Talks are either by the leader Diane Ward or guest speakers, followed by tea and discussion. Diane Ward
BIRDWATCHING AND NATURE	This group is now closed for Winter. It will restart in April 2026. Rita Berriman
BOARD GAMES	Lots of different games are played by this group which meets at the Parris Wood pub from 2-4 pm on the second Friday of the month. Christine Salamone
BOOK GROUP 1	Meeting at 10.30 am in Meg's home in Didsbury on the first Wednesday of the month. A small friendly group who enjoy reading and discussing a wide variety of books. Meg Davis
BOOK GROUP 2	Held at Didsbury Library 1.30 pm on the fourth Thursday of the month, meetings are led by members in turn to discuss titles suggested and agreed by the group members. Tom Grimshaw
BOOK GROUP 3	This group meets on the second Thursday of the month at 1.30 pm. There's no fixed venue but we meet in our homes on a rota. Johanna Keane
BRIDGE	Held at the Nazarene College, Didsbury. This group meets fortnightly on Fridays from 10 to 12 noon. This group is for experienced players only. Liz Thornhill
BRIDGE for BEGINNERS	This group meets weekly on Mondays from 1.30-3.30, at Emmanuel Parish Centre on Barlow Moor Rd. This group is for beginners and improvers although more experienced players are also welcome to join. You don't need a partner. Hilary Poole
CINEMA	Meeting on the last Friday of the month at 12.15 in the downstairs bar of HOME, 2 Tony Wilson Place. This group watches a variety of films, then meets afterwards to discuss them. Group Leader emails what's on the Tuesday before the meeting. Russell Ramsden
COMMUNITY SING-ALONG	This group sings well known songs in unison (no rehearsal time needed) in residential homes. Dates and times vary. Mike Evans
CREATIVE PHOTOGRAPHY	The group meets at Didsbury Parsonage at 10.30 on the second Monday of every month. The emphasis is on creativity rather than technical skill. Ann Howarth
CREATIVE WRITING	We meet at Withington Library on the last Friday of the month at 10.30 am. Members read and discuss their writings. New members always welcome. Sandra Grant
CURRENT AFFAIRS	This group meets to share and discuss items in the news on the 4th Thursday of the month at 1.30 pm in Ye Olde Cock pub, Didsbury. Adrienne Simpson
DRAMATIC READERS	Held on the 3rd Friday of the month, both face to face and by Zoom. Beryl Cowen
EGYPTOLOGY	This group meets at 10.30-12.30 on the third Thursday of the month at Didsbury Parsonage, to discuss all aspects of early Egyptian art and culture. Kathryn Fyfe
FRENCH CONVERSATION	We meet on the third Tuesday of the month 2 - 3pm at HOME cafe. Speakers of all levels of conversational French are welcome. Jean Thompson

GERMAN CONVERSATION	This group is for those who would like to practice their spoken German. Last Friday of the month at the Nazarene. Diane Ward
GETTING BY IN WELSH	At 10.30 on the first Friday of every month, this group meets at St Nicholas Church, Burnage, to discuss the language, history and culture of Wales. Beryl Cowen or Wena Stevenson
HOLIDAY GROUP	Keep an eye on the monthly newsletter for information about forthcoming holidays.
ITALIAN CONVERSATION	We are a small group looking to improve our Italian through listening and conversation. Please note that there is a separate group for learners – see Parliamo Italiano below. We meet on the 1st and 3rd Friday mornings of the month from 10.30 – 12.00. However, the group is currently full. If you like to be put on the waiting list contact: Elizabeth Wilson
KEEP FIT	This fitness group caters for a variety of fitness levels – there is no competition! It meets every Friday morning at 11.30 at St Nicholas Church Hall in Burnage. Anne Clarke
KNIT AND NATTER	We work on either our own projects or on items for charity. Don't worry if you can't knit—this is the place to learn. It's never too late! We meet on the last Wednesday of the month at Nazarene College. Diane Ward
LOCAL INTEREST VISITS	These will be advertised in the newsletter from time to time. Jill Evans
LUNCH CLUB	The club meets monthly at a variety of local restaurants and pubs, chosen with a view to ease of parking or public transport as well as price. John Olbrich
OPERATIC AND VOCAL APPRECIATION SOCIETY (OVAS)	Lovers of opera and music meet from 3.30 – 5.45 on the last Wednesday of every month. Len Evans
PIANO GROUP	We are a small group for piano players to play to each other in a supportive and relaxed setting, and share ideas about anything piano-related. All types of music and all levels welcome. We meet on the 4 th Thurs of month at Didsbury Baptist. Hilary Taylor
PARLIAMO ITALIANO Let's speak Italian!	A friendly and fun group for people who have little or no Italian but would like to learn. We aim to be able to understand and use familiar everyday expressions and basic phrases which would be of value on an Italian holiday. We aim to be able to interact in a simple way and to improve with time so that in due course, members could move on to the Italian Conversation group or attend both. We meet at St Christopher's Church, Moorgate Avenue, from 10.30 – 12.00 on the 2nd and 4th Fridays of the month. Andrew Bradbury
PHILOSOPHY	This group meets at 1.30 pm at Withington Library on the third Tuesday of the month. John Olbrich
PLAYREADING	Meetings are at Withington Library at 1.30 on the third Tuesday afternoon of the month. Numbers are limited for this group, but please contact the group leader to register your interest. Helen Nicolson
POETRY APPRECIATION	Poems on a chosen theme are discussed on the 1st Monday of the month from 11.00-12.30 at Victoria Grange, Barlow Moor Road. The group is currently full. Contact group leader to go on waiting list. Lynne Taylor
PSYCHOLOGY	This group meets on the 1st Monday of the month at 2pm via Zoom and the 4th Monday of the month face to face at St Nicholas Church, Burnage at 1pm. Beryl Cowen

SINGING FOR FUN	This group meets on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month at 2pm at Didsbury Baptist Church Judith Newton
SPANISH CONVERSATION	This group meets on the 1 st and 3 rd Thursdays of the month at 2 pm at the Slug and Lettuce in Didsbury Debbie Delange
TABLE TENNIS AND BADMINTON	Every Tuesday from 10.00-12.00, this group meets at the Armitage Centre, Moseley Road, Fallowfield. Equipment can be provided and the cost per session is £3.50. Ray Dumpleton
TAI CHI	Gentle exercise which benefits balance and calmness at the Lower Hall, Emmanuel Offices, behind the church from 1-2 pm every Tuesday. Peggy Foster
UKULELE	Would you like to strum and sing along with the ukelele group? Beginners are welcome. We meet from 10 – 11.15 at the Upper Hall of Emmanuel Parish Centre, behind the church, every Thursday Gerard Allcock
WALKING FOR HEALTH 1	Walks of around 3 miles are enjoyed by this group on the last Tuesday of every month. Details are given in the newsletter. Ian Burn
WALKING FOR HEALTH 2	This group meets on the second Wednesday of every month to follow the same route as Walking for Health Group 1. Anne Clarke
WELSH CONVERSATION	Siawns am Sgwrs. For learners who have already made a good start with conversations and want more practice. Not suitable for beginners. We meet monthly on the 2nd Wednesday from 10am - 12 at the Didsbury pub on Wilmslow Road. Megan Bennett

ANSWERS TO REBUS QUIZ

1. The long arm of the law
2. Money burning a hole in your pocket
3. Tennis shoes
4. A back rub
5. Long time, no see
6. Two left feet

MANCHESTER ORGANIC GARDENERS

Welcoming all gardeners in the Greater Manchester area



Saturday 14th March 2026

Planting for Small Gardens

By

Anthony Norman of Conquest Plant Nursery

2pm at Withington Methodist church, 439 Wilmslow Road, Withington, M20 4AN

Access by car from Egerton Crescent off Parsonage Road

£3 members / £5 guests includes light refreshments

Enquiries: morganicG22@gmail.com

March 2026

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<p>2 Anglo Saxon and Medieval History Via Zoom 10:30</p> <p>Poetry Appreciation 11:00-12:30 Victoria Grange</p> <p>Psychology 14:00 Zoom</p> <p>Beginners/Improvers Bridge 13:30 - 15:30 <i>New players see info for 16th March below.</i></p>	<p>3 Table Tennis / Badminton 10:00</p> <p>TaiChi 13:00-14:00</p> <p>SMu3a AGM and General Meeting. 14:00 - 16:00 Didsbury Baptist Church</p>	<p>4 Book Group 1. Meg's house 10:30. (Closed group)</p> <p>The Bird Watching & Nature group - Closed until April. If interested, contact Rita: [REDACTED]</p>	<p>5 Ukulele 10:00 -11:15</p> <p>Spanish Conversation 14:00</p>	<p>6 Bridge 9:45 - 12:00 * <i>*Note: Bridge is every week</i></p> <p>Italian Conversation 10:30-12:00</p> <p>Getting by in Welsh 10:30 Burnage Library. Note: new venue.</p> <p>Keep Fit 11:15-12:15</p>
<p>9</p> <p>Creative Photography 10:30 The Parsonage</p> <p>Beginners/Improvers Bridge 13:30 - 15:30. <i>New players see info for 16th March below.</i></p>	<p>10 Table Tennis / Badminton 10:00</p> <p>TaiChi 13:00-14:00</p> <p>Philosophy 13:30 Chorlton Library</p> <p>Singing for fun 14:00 – 16:00 Didsbury Baptist Church.</p>	<p>11 Welsh Conversation 10am (for 10:15) to 12pm The Didsbury Pub Wilmslow Rd</p> <p>Walking for Health 2. See Newsletter</p>	<p>12 Ukulele 10:00 -11:15</p> <p>Book Group 3. 13:30 HOME Café, Emmanuel Church.</p> <p>Community Sing-Along 14:00 Belong M20 2UW</p>	<p>13 Bridge 9:45 - 12:00 *</p> <p>Parliamento Italiano (Andrew) 10:30-12:00 St. Christopher's Church Moorgate Ave. M20 1HE</p> <p>Keep Fit 11:15-12:15</p> <p>Board Games 14:00-16:00 Parrswood Pub</p>
<p>16 Anglo Saxon and Medieval History Via Zoom 10:30</p> <p>Beginners/ Improvers Bridge. 13:30 - 15:30 A new group for complete beginners is starting this month; there are limited places. All players new to the group must email Hilary before the session date.</p>	<p>17 Table Tennis/ Badminton 10:00</p> <p>TaiChi 13:00-14:00</p> <p>Playreading 13:30 Withington Library</p> <p>French Group 14:00-15:00 HOME Café Emmanuel Church.</p>	<p>18 Lunch Group (for one month only) will be meeting for an early evening dinner at 17:30 on Thurs 19th March. Location: Aspire, Altrincham, WA4 5PQ. <i>To be added to the list please email John at:</i> [REDACTED]</p> <p>Art Appreciation 14:00 The Parsonage.</p>	<p>19 Ukelele 10:00 - 11:15</p> <p>Egyptology 10:30-12:30 The Parsonage</p> <p>Spanish Conversation 14:00</p> <p>17:30 Lunch Group Aspire Altrincham</p>	<p>20 Bridge 9:45 - 12:00 *</p> <p>Italian Conversation 10:30-12:00</p> <p>Keep Fit 11:15-12:15</p> <p>Dramatic Readers 14:00 Northern Tennis Club. Note: new group.</p>
<p>23</p> <p>Beginners/ Improvers Bridge 13:30 - 15:30 <i>New players see info for 16th March.</i></p>	<p>24 Table Tennis / Badminton 10:00</p> <p>TaiChi 13:00-14:00</p> <p>Singing for fun 14:00 – 16:00 Didsbury Baptist Church.</p>	<p>25</p> <p>Knit & Natter 14:00-15:30 Nazarene Conservatory.</p> <p>OVAS 15:00 – 17:15</p>	<p>26 Ukulele 10:00 -11:15</p> <p>Piano Group 11:00-12:30. Didsbury Baptist Church. Note: new venue. <i>For more details, contact Hilary:</i> [REDACTED]</p> <p>Book Group 2. 13:30 Didsbury Library</p> <p>Current Affairs 13:30 The Olde Cock Pub</p>	<p>27 Bridge 9:45 - 12:00 *</p> <p>Creative Writing 10:30</p> <p>German Conversation 10:30 (Nazarene)</p> <p>Parliamento Italiano (Andrew) 10:30-12:00 St. Christopher's Church Moorgate Ave. M20 1HE</p> <p>Keep Fit 11:15-12:15</p> <p>Cinema 12:15</p>
<p>30 Psychology 13:30 Burnage Library. Note: new venue.</p> <p>Beginners Bridge 13:30 - 15:30. <i>New players see 16th March.</i></p>	<p>31 Table Tennis / Badminton 10:00</p> <p>TaiChi 13:00-14:00</p> <p>Walking for Health 1. See Newsletter</p>			