



# Poynton u3a News

---

***poyntonu3a.org.uk***

***Issue 48-1***

***29<sup>th</sup> Aug 2025***

---

## **Poynton u3a Update**

### **General Meetings**

The next General Meeting is on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> September when *Simon Michael* will be giving a talk entitled *My Life in Crime*.

Following that, there is a meeting on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> October when *Frank Vigon* will be telling us about the *Strange Birth of British TV*.

### **Interest Groups**

It is a while since there was a Groups List in the newsletter and we also have a number of new members, so this seemed like a good time to provide an up-to-date Groups List which is included at the end of the newsletter (Page 10).

### **Scam Awareness Talk**

At the last General Meeting, Philip Lawrence had several recommendations in order to keep safe online. He said he would email details of these so that some of them could be included in the newsletter. At the time of writing, nothing has been received but I did make a note of one of them.

Philip described how, if you type the following on your phone keypad,

**\*#06#**

you should get a window showing the IMEI and the Serial Number of the device. They may be accompanied by the numbers in barcode form. IMEI stands for *International Mobile Equipment Identity*. It is a unique number for identifying a device on a mobile network.

These two numbers can also be found in the phone *About* section of *Settings* for both Android and iPhone devices.

However you obtain these numbers, they should be recorded in a safe place. (Not on the phone!) They are useful in police theft investigations and insurance claims.

## Members' Contributions

### Malvern Walking Holiday 2025

In June a group of friends, most of whom belong to the walking group, had a very enjoyable stay in Great Malvern, Worcestershire. The weather was very kind, warm, sunny with an odd shower. As in previous years we all found our own accommodation to suit ourselves, hotel, motor home, Airbnb or cottage.



Malvern has many interesting features and is the place that inspired Sir Edward Elgar to write some of his iconic music including Land of Hope and Glory. There is a statue of him in the centre of town.

In Victorian times people would flock to Malvern to 'take the waters', due to the natural springs in the area. 'Malvhina' is a striking fountain in the centre of the town where locals and passers-by come to fill their water bottles.



*Malvhina Fountain*

The town has an ancient priory and a medieval archway, gardens and theatres. The old 'clappers' from the bells are mounted just inside the entrance to the priory. Ever used the phrase 'going like the clappers'? Perhaps this is the origin of it!



*Great Malvern Priory*



*The old clappers*

Some of the group arranged to meet up for an evening meal at one of the many restaurants in the town. Lunches were more casual, often a bought sandwich at a handy roadside snack bar called 'Sally's Place'. Their large flat baps were the size of a tea plate! They also had a very long list of locally made ice creams in many different flavours. One of the group tried her best to sample as many flavours as possible!

In between eating ice cream and lunches we actually did some walking! The Malvern Hills offer many grades of walk but mostly involving going up and down hills! However, our first walk led by Rachel and Derek took us to Upton on Severn, a very pleasant, picturesque town with historic buildings dating back to the 17th century. The walk included a walk by the River Severn and through an area of special scientific interest.



*Upton on Severn*

On days without an organised walk members of the group visited nearby places of interest such as Gloucester, Tenbury Wells, Tetbury and the famous Morgan car Museum in Malvern.

Our second walk led by Peter and Kate started at the British Camp car park. Initially descending through woods and fields we reached a car park at Gardiner's Quarry where we stopped for a picnic lunch. The next part of the walk was uphill to Jubilee Hill to pick up the track to Pinnacle Hill, Black Hill and then descending to the car park and Sally's Place for refreshments and, of course, ice creams! My favourite was clotted cream and blackberry!



*Refreshment stop*

The third and final walk was led by Mike, assisted by Cecilia. Again, we started from the British Camp car park. The route took us uphill with stunning views over several counties. We reached the ancient hill fort of British Camp with its distinctive defensive ditches. One of the walkers spotted a possible skylark bathing in a puddle. Further along we encountered thousands of tiny froglets on their journey to find water. We paused for a

group photo in front of the so-called Smugglers Cave, a man-made grotto carved into a volcanic basalt outcrop. There is no proven link to smuggling!



*Ditches and view from British Camp constructed in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC*



*The walking group at Smugglers Cave*

Our return was downhill to Hangman's Hill and the Three Choirs Way, passing British Camp Reservoir before reaching the car park and the start of the walk.



And finally, our holiday co-ordinator, Cecilia, enjoying a well-earned ice cream! Thanks to Cecilia for co-ordinating the WhatsApp group so we all knew each other's plans on the holiday.

**Kate Marsham**

## ***Contributions to the Newsletter***

*The timing and length of the newsletter is dependent to a large extent on the contributions submitted by our members. If you would like to write an article or provide some pictures, send your contribution to [news@poyntonu3a.org.uk](mailto:news@poyntonu3a.org.uk)*

## Reading the 'Riot Act'.

The Town Mayor bellowed at the top of his voice,  
Reciting aloud the 'Riot Act' to an angry mob.  
Hoping they would disperse back to their homes,  
Instead, they stayed behind to finish the job.  
In 1715 in England the 'Riot Act' was a real document.  
It labelled any group of twelve or more,  
Who could be a threat to the peace of the town.  
After an hour, anyone who remained was arrested by force.

In 1819 the law was later put to the test,  
During the infamous Peterloo Massacre.  
In which a Cavalry group attacked a large crowd of Mancunians,  
Who were stood in solidarity, when the assault occurred.  
It was said they appeared to ignore a reading of the  
'Riot Act'. And what started as a peaceful protest,  
Turned into a violent act, as the Cavalry charged the crowd.  
Eighteen people lost their lives and there were countless arrests.

The 'Riot Act' was a way to suppress free speech,  
When all the people wanted was reform and representation.  
It denied the citizens the right to make an orderly protest.  
At the time, all the people got, was confrontation.  
The 'Riot Act' was a warning of the consequences of what could happen  
And was punishable by death without the benefit of a ceremony.  
At Peterloo the crowd that day were dignified and disciplined, dressed in their Sunday best.  
After the event, there was much ill-will and acrimony.

"Mary stood by the monument, which was unveiled in St Peter's field in 2019. She gazed down at the eleven concentric stone steps. She gently touched her name engraved along with the other seventeen people who sadly died, which included three other women, a two-year old boy and an unborn baby, remembered now after 200 years."

Mary Heys died at Peterloo from a Cavalry charge.

**Susan J Pyett. Peterloo Anniversary 16th August.**

---

## The Royal Institution - Part 2

### Davy Lamp

Today, Humphry Davy's name is automatically associated with the invention of the miners' safety lamp. However, this was not without controversy.

Before the invention of safety lamps, miners used candles with open flames. This gave rise to frequent explosions due to the presence of methane and other flammable gases, usually called *firedamp*. Prior to Davy's work on the safety lamp, there had been several previous versions of safety lamps which were starting to be used in mines.

Details of Davy's invention were released late in 1815. A letter from Davy (which he intended to be kept private) describing his findings and various suggestions for a safety lamp was made public at a meeting in Newcastle on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 1815 and a paper describing the lamp was formally presented at a Royal Society meeting in London on 9<sup>th</sup> November. The first trial of a Davy lamp with a wire sieve was at Hebburn Colliery on 9<sup>th</sup> January 1816.

However, independently, George Stephenson (of "Rocket" fame) with little scientific knowledge, devised a lamp in which the air entered via tiny holes, through which the flames of the lamp could not pass. A month before Davy presented his design to the Royal Society, Stephenson demonstrated his own lamp to two witnesses by taking it down Killingworth Colliery and holding it in front of a fissure from which firedamp was issuing.

Davy was awarded the Royal Society's Rumford Medal. Davy's lamp differed from Stephenson's in that the flame was surrounded by a screen of gauze, whereas Stephenson's prototype lamp had a perforated plate contained in a glass cylinder (a design mentioned in Davy's Royal Society paper as an alternative to his preferred solution). For his invention Davy was given £2,000 worth of silver (the money being raised by public subscription), whilst Stephenson was accused of stealing the idea from Davy.

A local committee of enquiry gathered in support of Stephenson exonerated him, showing that he had been working separately to create the Geordie lamp, and raised a subscription for him of £1,000. Davy and his supporters refused to accept their findings, and would not see how an uneducated man such as Stephenson could come up with the solution he had: Stephenson himself freely admitted that he had arrived at a practical solution on the basis of an erroneous theory. In 1833, a House of Commons committee found that Stephenson had equal claim to having invented the safety lamp. Davy went to his grave claiming that Stephenson had stolen his idea. The Stephenson lamp was used almost exclusively in North East England, whereas the Davy lamp was used everywhere else. The experience gave Stephenson a lifelong distrust of London-based, theoretical, scientific experts.



*Many different types of apparatus designed to reduce the risk of fires in mines are on display at The Royal Institution. Davy's first safety lamp from 1815 is in the centre of the picture on the orange base.*

## Michael Faraday

Michael Faraday was born in Newington Butts, Southwark, the son of a Sandemanian blacksmith who had moved from the North West of England.

He served an apprenticeship with George Riebau as a bookbinder from 1805 to 1812. He was Assistant in the Royal Institution's laboratory for part of 1813 and again from 1815 to 1826 (touring the Continent with Humphry Davy in the interim). He was appointed Assistant Superintendent of the House of the Royal Institution in 1821, Director of the Laboratory in 1825 and six years later the Fullerian Professorship of Chemistry was created for him. In the mid-1820s, he founded both the Friday Evening Discourses and the Christmas Lectures delivering many lectures in both series himself. He was appointed Scientific Adviser to the Admiralty in 1829, was Professor of Chemistry at the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich between 1830 and 1851 and Scientific Adviser to Trinity House from 1836 to 1865.

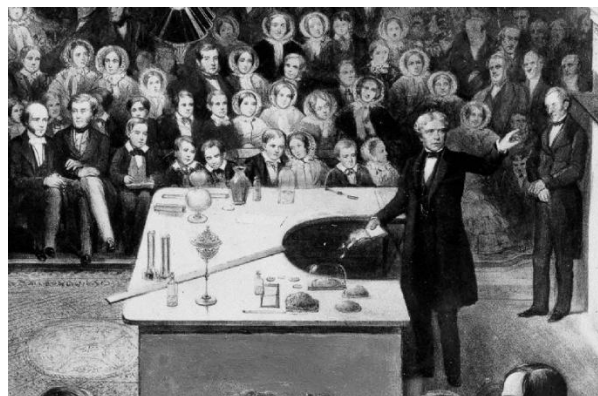
His major discoveries include electro-magnetic rotations (1821), benzene (1825), electro-magnetic induction (1831), the laws of electrolysis and coining words such as electrode, cathode, ion (early 1830s) the magneto-optical effect and diamagnetism (both 1845) and thereafter formulating the field theory of electro-magnetism.

He was twice offered the Presidency of the Royal Society, but declined on both occasions. He publicly stated several times that he would not accept a knighthood, but no evidence has been found that he was ever offered one. He was, however, awarded a Civil List Pension in 1836 and in 1858 the Queen provided him with a Grace and Favour House at Hampton Court where he died.

## The Christmas Lectures

Michael Faraday started the Christmas Lectures at the Ri in 1825, to engage and educate young people about science.

The first evidence of the Christmas Lectures exists in the form of an advertisement in *The Times* published in 1825. This introduced the first ever Christmas Lectures series hosted by John Millington on Natural Philosophy. This was 25 years after the first ever Ri lecture in 1800. The Ri have hosted the lectures every year since, stopping only for World War II.



*Michael Faraday giving the Christmas Lecture in 1856*

The second series of Christmas Lectures were presented by Michael Faraday, who went on to present a total of 19 - the most by one individual.

It is a common misconception that the Christmas Lectures were first broadcast in 1966, as the first ever scientific experiments were broadcast on BBC television in 1936 using content from the upcoming Christmas Lectures presented by Geoffrey Ingram Taylor. This was just seven weeks after the BBC had launched the world's first regular television service.

With the return of the Christmas Lectures after WWII, the BBC approached the Ri in 1948 about televising the series. There were broadcasts of the 1948, 1949, 1950 and 1951 lectures.

In 1952 Edward Andrade, who gave the 1950 Christmas Lectures, was forced to resign from his position as Fullerian Professor of Chemistry at the Ri. The legal battle that followed temporarily halted the collaboration between the BBC and the Ri, including the broadcasting of the Christmas Lectures.

In 1953, William Lawrence Bragg was appointed as Resident Professor at the Ri, and he fought hard to restore the reputation of the Ri and their relationship with the BBC. In 1966, the newly formed BBC2 run by David Attenborough commissioned the complete 7-part Christmas Lectures series to be televised.

This was the start of the Christmas Lectures being regularly televised. The series was presented by Eric Laithwaite and entitled *The Engineer in Wonderland*.

It wasn't until 1994 that a woman presented the Christmas Lectures, with Baroness Susan Greenfield being the first with *Journey to the Centres of the Brain*.

The lectures have also been given live in Japan and Singapore.

**Derek Gatenby**

## Things to Do

### Sudoku No 62

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

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

Below is the solution to No 61

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

Sadly, there are no quiz questions from Hooha this time.

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

1. If cows are bovine, what are sheep?  
*Ovine*
2. What is the original meaning of the word "jaeger"?  
*Hunter*
3. How tall is the Eiffel Tower? 1250 feet, 1060 feet or 980 feet?  
*1060 feet*
4. "The death of one man is a tragedy. The death of millions is a" what?  
*Statistic. Quote reported to have been said by Josef Stalin*
5. Which members of the Travelling Wilburys are still alive?  
*Bob Dylan and Jeff Lynne*

## Poynton u3a Groups List

Group	Organiser	Meeting
Acoustic Folk/Rock Band	Geoff Brindle	Contact Organiser
Art	Linda Thompson	2.00 - 4pm Mondays at the Civic Centre
Bird Watching	Carol Gatenby & Anne Wynn	Contact Organiser
Board Games	Cecilia Storr-Best	Twice monthly. 2 <sup>nd</sup> Tuesday and 4 <sup>th</sup> Friday. 2-4pm. Brookside Garden Centre
Bridge	Dorothy Rowland Brian Johnson	2.00pm alternate Mondays at Davenport Golf Club
Creative Writing	Ruth Howard	1.30pm 2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Mondays in month Davenport Golf Club
Crossword Compiling	Nigel Burin	By arrangement with the organiser
Diners' Club	Barbara Tankard Barbara Heyes	Information at General Meetings and on website
Discussion	Keith Batchelor	Monthly Wednesday mornings
Family History	Moyna Barrott	2.00pm 1 <sup>st</sup> Wednesday in month. At The Centre.
French Conversation	Sandra & Keith Batchelor	Monthly. Usually Friday afternoon. Contact Organiser
Geology	Peter Bennett	Monthly. Usually 4th Thursday in month
German Conversation	Peter Owen	Monthly
History	Catherine Owen	2.00pm 4 <sup>th</sup> Thursday in month
History 2	Geoff Reason	4th Wed in month 2pm Brookside Garden Centre
Local History	Alan Hulme	11.00 am. 1st Tuesday of month
Music Appreciation	Liz Markham	2.00pm 1st Thursday in month
Photography	Peter Bennett & Hilary Tivey	Usually 1st Friday of month 2pm Poynton Civic Centre Contact Organisers
Pickleball	Peter McWhirter	Every Tuesday. 4.30-6.00pm. Poynton Leisure Centre.
Reading Group 1	Iris Neale	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tuesday in month
Reading Group 2	Glenys Parry-Jones	Last Monday of the month 10.30am Contact organiser
Science & Technology	Carol & Derek Gatenby	Usually 4th Tuesday of month. Contact Organisers
Short Walks	Joyce Streets	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tuesday in month at 10.30am
Spanish	Paul Freeborn	Mondays 10.30-11.30. Brookside Garden Centre
Table Tennis	Janet & Peter Gill	Tuesday 9.45-12.15, Wednesday 2.00-4.30pm and Thursday 2.00-4.30pm at Poynton Sports Club
Walking	Marilyn Westbrook	1 <sup>st</sup> Thursday in month

## Other Poynton Groups Open to Poynton u3a

Group	Organiser	Meeting
Hallé Concert Visits	Yvonne Sharma	Information at General Meetings & on web site
PHS-PTA Theatre Trips, Minibreaks & Day Trips	Elaine Roe	Information at General Meetings & on web site
Walking Netball	Poynton Leisure C.	Mondays 10.15 – 11.15