



Poynton in Early Bloom

It was suggested that we should have pictures on the front page showing the splendours of Poynton. How's this for a start?



Also, there has been progress with the Heritage Garden (see Summer 2017 issue).



The garden is being officially opened on Saturday 14th April starting at 10.00am.

What's This? – see page 12



Who's This? – see page 10



Where's This? – see page 3



Committee News

Chairman's Comments

One of the highlights towards the end of last year was the visit in November of some 100 Poynton U3A members to Chatsworth House which Iris and Gerry arranged. We were fortunate that the weather was reasonable for the time of the year and enjoyed not only the wide range of market stalls which had been set up for the occasion but also the House itself, decorated for Christmas with the theme of Dickens' Christmas Carol. The costumes and the decor were magnificent, the staff very knowledgeable and helpful and the various displays well thought out

Traditionally we use our first General Meeting of the year for registering renewals of membership and also new members. Our January speaker this year was Edwina Currie. Since we expected a good audience, we opened our registration well before the start of her talk and used the Council Chamber to provide additional space. This made things easier for everyone. We also provided an opportunity for members to pay their membership fees by electronic means, in our case contactless cards.

Some of our members had already renewed by post but a further 241 renewed on the day and 51 new members also joined, the whole process being completed before Edwina began her speech.

Over 250 members were present in the Main Hall as Edwina spoke on Growing Old Disgracefully and her theme was the change in demography in the UK as older people became a much higher percentage of the population. In 1900 over 20% of people died before they reached the age of 1. Nowadays only 15% of people die before the age of 65. In 1950 there were 250 centenarians in the UK; in 2015 there were 14,000. All this has come about from a rise in standards of living and, of course, advances in medicine. Older people now have new lifestyles to explore and new experiences to enjoy and the U3A movement is a catalyst for that. Edwina's experience of public speaking was obvious as she engaged with an interested audience, many of whom stayed behind to talk with her.

Although we have not yet reached capacity for presentations in the Main Hall, we do now need to consider how we deal with larger numbers of members. It's no longer possible for our committee to staff all these occasions and it is fortunate that we had a range of "Friends" to call on. It was only because of this extra support that we managed to get through the organisation of our first General Meeting and

registration this year. So – many thanks to all those who assisted.

In March this year Joan Stepto is resigning from her role as Interest Group Coordinator and Sandra Batchelor will take over from her, joining Liz Markham. See below for some thoughts on Joan's contribution to our U3A. Although Joan is handing over to Sandra I'm sure she will still be helping us out across a range of our activities for some time to come.

David Sewart

Joan Stepto and Poynton U3A – a brief history

Joan Stepto has announced that she will be resigning from the committee following this year's AGM. Her friendship and support will be sorely missed.

Joan has been an active member of Poynton U3A since its inception in January 2011 when she was a member of the original steering committee. However, that was not the beginning. Back in 2010 Joan and Bob Stepto hosted the first meeting held to discuss the formation of our U3A. They volunteered to be the first interest group organisers. Although Bob did much of the paperwork (on his computer), Joan was their spokesperson. Following the introductory meeting in November 2010 they collated forms from prospective members and Joan reported to the first committee meeting in January 2011. By then there were 27 interest groups, 9 of which had leaders. That was before we had any paid-up members. At almost every general meeting Joan would report on the state of the interest groups. Sometimes she would arrange a speaker and attend a group meeting herself to try to persuade somebody to lead it.

Joan has been instrumental in organising the yearly gathering of group leaders, personally sending Christmas cards and an invitation to attend the gathering. She has been an active member of various sub-groups set up within the committee, including the newsletter and arrangements for Christmas meetings.

Joan's presentation at our first AGM in 2012 was as professional as usual, primarily concerning the activities of the, then, 32 interest groups. She ended her presentation with a tribute to Bob Stepto, thanking him for his 'support and diligence' in keeping the records up to date. He wasn't expecting that!

Joan has said that she will remain a Friend of Poynton U3A after she 'retires' but I will miss her, not only as a fellow committee member but also as a real friend.

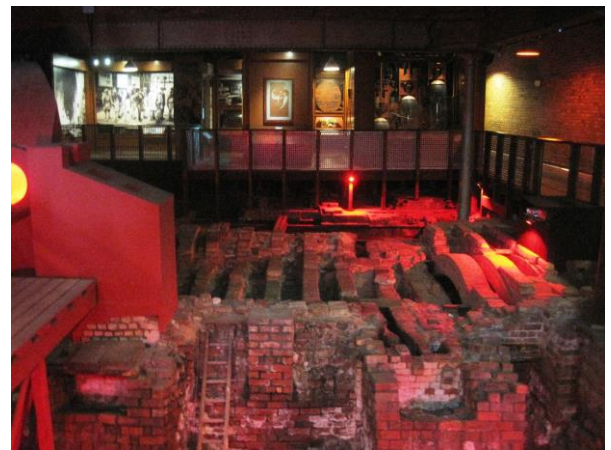
Carol Gatenby

Members' Corner

Looking through glass, from now to the past

On a bright, cold, late November morning the Science and Technology group made their way to the World of Glass Museum at St. Helens. As always with Derek and Carol's organisation and instructions all was bound to go smoothly. We were told the directions were fairly straight-forward and they certainly were for us, as we were back seat passengers, with David Akers driving and Derek riding shotgun.

Arriving at the Museum we entered through a brick-built cone-shaped replica of a 'forest cone house' then into a light and airy building mainly constructed of glass; well why not, if you manufacture the stuff? The gift shop was displaying all sorts of beautiful things made of glass, as well as the usual tat to part children from their pounds, more marbles than you could roll a dobber at.



Having had a quick look round we made our way to the café area for post-journey drinks, or were they pre-tour, or really both. This started with a skilful display of glass handling and blowing along with commentary explaining why, when and how. Most of the expertise seemed to depend on the feel and colour of the molten glass blob on the end of his rod, which had to be in constant motion to prevent it drooping out of shape.



(continued on next page)

Members' Corner

Looking through glass, from now to the past (continued)

From there we passed into a small projection room to be shown the history of glass making. This film was fascinating and enthralling, so I am not going to say any more about it because it will spoil the experience for you when you go, and I recommend you do.

Having withstood the bombardment of our sensory organs with those two displays we then repaired to the café for a rather good lunch. After that repast we were divided into two groups for the tour, our guide was called Barbara. She was very knowledgeable and had probably done a course on circular breathing, like a didgeridoo player, as she never paused for breath. First looking round the glass displays in the entrance, we then were led over the bridge connecting the new to the old, spanning the "Hotties" which was the end of the Sankey canal which was once so warm with the outflow that it supported tropical fish.

We had been told that the tunnels, as they were referred to, were very cold, and they were, which juxtaposed our sight-seeing tour with the temperatures that must have been normal when operating, with gas burners making and keeping the glass molten. Working conditions were not a priority when William Windle Pilkington built the world's first regenerative glass making furnace in 1887.

This furnace was working twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Glass making was to be the main industry in St Helens for many years.

Then it was on to the museum to see artefacts from different times and cultures. "Obsidian" natural glass, Man's early attempts at making and using glass through the development of various techniques to produce larger sheets of glass that would be more users friendly.

We had seen the chandelier from Manchester Airport on the way in. Now having seen the glass blowing, hearing the history and a tour of the museum, we could look and marvel at one of the original of four chandeliers, all two tons of it, having been conserved and hung in 2008. All the crystals were blown by one man in Murano, 1500 for each chandelier - that takes a lot of puff.

Clive B Hill

One of Our U3A Short Walks

As you walk along the canal from Holehouse Lane car park towards Bollington you can see White Nancy* in the distance beckoning you forward. Canal boats drift by and herons are waiting ready to pounce on any unlucky fish. Then you come to Clarence Mill once industrious, producing fine lace, but now smart apartments and commercial units. We stop to look at the wonderful views into the hills and beyond from the aqueduct.

After a while changing our route on to the Middlewood Way we come to the viaduct from which we can look down on to the old part of Bollington. Apart from the park, sports grounds, and modern brewery there is St. Gregory's R.C. Church built in the 1950's on the foundations of the first church built in 1834. The row of cottages you can now see were once St. Gregory's school in 1866 and only reverted back to cottages in 1962. So apart from exercise, pleasant conversation and admiring nature we can learn to appreciate the history of our environment.

*The White Nancy was built in 1817 to commemorate the Battle of Waterloo.

Joan Stepto

Coffee Mornings

Members continue to enjoy the Coffee Mornings at Wetherspoons (Poynton) on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 10.30 am. The next dates are March 28th, April 25th, May 23rd and June 27th.

Anne Wynn

Diary Dates Monthly General Meetings 3rd Tuesday in month at 2.00pm - Poynton Civic Hall (Doors Open at 1.30pm)	
April 17 th	Karen Corcoran – The Lady Policeman
May 15 th	Judith Popley – My Life at Granada TV
June 19 th	Peter Watson – The Artefacts of Folk Magic
July 17 th	Margaret Campbell – My Experience in India

Members' Corner

Edwina Currie

Edwina Currie left the wilds of Whaley Bridge to talk to our U3A, enticing a huge number of our members to attend the January meeting. She began by telling us that she would be talking about 'god', growing old disgracefully. Her encouraging, amusing and positive ideas were in direct opposition to the thought that any group of people should be viewed as has-beens, bed-blockers or any of the other derogatory terms used about older people, and she backed these with a number of interesting statistics and anecdotes. Her feeling is that we should at least attempt to understand what younger people are doing, are interested in, and generally what makes them tick, in order to keep in the loop.

Now we know that we will receive a birthday card from the Queen on reaching 100, but not get another until aged 105, then yearly thereafter. She recalled that one lady constituent had 5 such cards and all the pictures of the Queen were identical. So when approaching her 109th birthday she wrote to The Palace asking for her next card to have a different photograph. On her birthday she had got a different card, and it was hand-delivered by a postman, who proved to be Prince William. It seems that not all letters to The Palace are dealt with by secretaries!

She has followed a number of paths since leaving Parliament, including becoming a writer and broadcaster. She was asked to appear in pantomime in Richmond but felt that was too far from home, but agreed to be in Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs in Northwich, a more manageable journey from Whaley Bridge. Upon relating this offer to her husband, he asked "Who is the star?" "I am!!!!" and she had great fun as the Wicked Queen.

In 2014 on receiving a call from her agent asking whether she had a current passport, yes, a visa for Australia, yes, and was free for the next few weeks, yes, she found herself a last minute participant in I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here. She was one of 3 older contestants who all proved to be far more resilient and resourceful than many of the younger people out there.

All very different from her life as a Health Minister, on the receiving end of much flack after she divulged the true situation with salmonella and eggs in 1988. Would a man have been treated in the same way?

I think that her ideas could be an inspiration for us all to do as much as we can, while we are able, and not to believe that youth is the great wonder of the world, but that older people should feel that the world is theirs also. The possibilities are endless; even at the slowest and smallest level. We can't all be celebrities!

Helen J Stanley

Membership FAQs

During the membership renewal process a number of questions were asked more than once.

Are there any age restrictions on membership? I was told you had to be over 60.

There are no age restrictions. The constitution refers to "older people and those who are retired from full-time work".

I can't attend General Meetings. Do I still have to pay the membership fee to join an interest group?

You have to be a paid-up member of the U3A to attend interest group meetings or visits. This is mainly for insurance reasons.

The organisation has the word "University" in its title. Do I have to have any qualifications?

No qualifications are required. It has been suggested that the word "University" is putting some people off which may be why the organisations are just called U3As.

The next North West Regional Summer School will be held at Newton Rigg Agricultural College, near Penrith, on August 28th to 31st.

The courses this year are

Ruskin and His Legacy

Housing, Modernism and Architecture,

What did the Romans ever do for us?

Lake District Minerals

Modern Medicine

Recorder Playing

Science is for Everyone

Making friends with Music

The Wars of the Three Kingdoms and Two Generals

Twentieth Century Russia from Tsarism to

Communism and then what

Minibreak

Suffolk Mini Break

On a dull Thursday in September, with rain in the air in Poynton, we set off on a mini break to Suffolk. By the time we reached our first stop however, the sun was shining as it continued to do for the four days we were away. How lucky we were to have chosen the only fine few days in weeks of dreary rainy weather!



St. Edmundsbury Cathedral



The Nutshell

Bury St Edmunds is a beautiful market town with a lovely Cathedral and many other interesting buildings. It boasts the smallest pub in Britain, The Nutshell, you would need a very small cat indeed to swing it around in here. A highlight of the town for many people were the beautiful Abbey Gardens which contain the ruins of the Abbey and feature all sorts of flowers, trees, lawns, and wildlife. From here we travelled on to the Marks Tey Hotel, which proved to be an excellent base, clean, comfortable and with very good food.

On Friday morning we visited the charming seaside town of Southwold, famous for its beach huts, on shore lighthouse and restored pier. One of the beach huts was for sale but we realised that even if we all clubbed together we would be a few pounds short of the £120,000 asking price!



Southwold Pier



Southwold Beach

In the afternoon we visited Aldeburgh well known as the home of composer Benjamin Britten and the Aldeburgh Festival. There is a sculpture, The Scallop on the Beach, to commemorate Britten which has caused a lot of local controversy; there have been petitions both to keep it and to have it removed. I rather liked it myself.



The Scallop, Aldeburgh

Minibreak



Mask at Sutton Hoo

On Saturday we visited Sutton Hoo, the famous site where the ship burial of an Anglo-Saxon king and his treasured possessions was discovered. There was an interesting exhibition detailing the history of the site and how the discovery was made and there were replicas of the treasures. (The originals are in the British Museum.) Some people chose to have a guided tour of the burial mounds which was very interesting and informative and you could also visit rooms in Mrs Pretty's house, Mrs Pretty being the owner of the site when the discovery was made. In the afternoon we visited the picturesque hamlet of Flatford which was the inspiration for some of John Constable's most famous pictures and we were able to stand in the same spot from which he painted the most well-known one, the Hay Wain.



Flatford Mill

On our final day we made our way to Lavenham one of the prettiest and best preserved medieval villages in England with its beautiful half-timbered and crooked houses.



Willy Lott's Cottage



The Swan, Lavenham

Late morning we set off for our last stop on the tour, Stamford, 'the finest stone town in England' according to Sir Walter Scott. Stamford's fine Georgian buildings have made it a popular location for period dramas such as *Pride & Prejudice* and *Middlemarch* and purely by chance there was a Georgian Festival on the day we visited. There were people dressed in period costume, carriage rides, battle re-enactments and street markets all contributing to a lovely atmosphere and a most pleasant end to the trip.

Following the now established pattern there will be two mini breaks in 2018, one in the Spring and one in the Autumn. The Spring mini break is to the Cotswolds and Winchester, visiting Snowhill Manor, Cirencester, Lacock and Stow on the Wold, the city of Winchester and Avebury stone circle. This will take place in April and at the end of September we will be going to Kent, calling at St Albans on the way and then visiting Canterbury, Whitstable, Rye, Sissinghurst Castle Garden and Winston Churchill's former home Chartwell. Details of the trips may be found on the Mini Breaks page of the U3A website.

Elaine Roe

Groups List

Group	Organiser	Meeting
Acoustic Folk/Rock Band	Geoff Brindle	Contact Organiser
Art	David Williams	1.45-3.45pm Mondays at the Civic Hall
Art Appreciation		Organiser Required
Ballet Appreciation	Meg Humphries	1 st Thursday or 4 th Wednesday each month
Bird Watching	Peter Owen	Monthly. Contact Organiser (Programme on web site)
Bridge	Dorothy Rowland	2.00pm alternate Mondays at the Civic Hall
Bus Pass Explorer	Evelyn Shepherd	Restarts in March. Contact Organiser
Cake Decorating	Ann Tofield	Contact Organiser
Creative Writing	Veronica O'Connor Ann Walker	2.00pm 2 nd & 4 th Mondays in month Davenport Golf Club
Crosswords	Ed Milius	By arrangement with the organiser
Day Trips	Iris & Gerry Neale	Information at General Meetings & on website
Diners' Club	Norma Shreeve	Next Lunch - Friday 23rd March at 'The Three Bears', 12 for 12.30.
Discussion	Les Simpson	
D.I.Y.	Sue Badger	4 th Thursday in month
Family History	Moyna Barrott	2.00pm 1 st Wednesday in month at the Civic Hall
Film Discussion Group	Maggie Eagland	2.00pm 3 rd Wednesday in month at Wetherspoons
French Conversation	Sandra & Keith Batchelor	Monthly. Contact Organiser
Geology	Peter Bennett	Monthly. Contact Organiser
German Conversation	Peter Owen	Monthly
History	Wendy Fermor Dorothy Bayman	2.00pm 4 th Tuesday in month
Music Appreciation	Liz Markham	2.00pm 1st Thursday in month
Needlecrafts	Beryl Simpson	1.45-3.45pm 4 th Thursday in month at the Civic Hall
Newsletter	Clive Hill	Contact Organiser
Photography	Peter Bennett & Hilary Tivey John Jurics	Monthly. Contact Organisers
Play Reading	Catherine Owen	2.15pm 1 st Tuesday in month
Reading Group 1	Iris Neale	2 nd Tuesday in month
Reading Group 2	Glenys Parry-Jones	Last Monday of the month 10.30am at Wetherspoons
Science & Technology	Carol & Derek Gatenby	Contact Organisers
Scrabble	Dorothy Bayman	2.00pm 2 nd Monday in month
Short Walks	Joan Stepto	2 nd & 4 th Tuesdays in month
Spanish	Paul Freeborn	Mondays 10.15-11.45
Table Tennis	Janet Gill	Every Tuesday 10.00-12.00, every Wednesday 2.00- 4.30pm and every Thursday 1.30-4.30pm at Poynton Sports Club
Walking	Marilyn Westbrook	1 st Thursday in month

Groups List

Other Poynton Groups open to our U3A Members

Group	Organiser	Meeting
Hallé Concert Visits	Yvonne Sharma	Information at General Meetings & on web site
PHS-PTA Theatre Trips	Elaine Roe	Information at General Meetings & on web site
PHS-PTA Minibreaks	Elaine Roe	Information at General Meetings & on web site
Walking Netball	Liz Arrowsmith	Every Tuesday 11.00am-12.00 at Poynton Leisure Centre

NEC Network U3A Open Groups

Group	Organiser	Telephone	Meeting
Badminton (Bramhall)	Douglas Moore	Contact Bramhall U3A	2.00-4.00pm Tuesdays
Bridge (Wilmslow)	Mavis Merryman	Contact Wilmslow U3A	7.30-10.00pm Monday
Creative Writing (Bramhall)	Pat George	Contact Bramhall U3A	2.00pm 2 nd Wednesday in month
Cycling (Wilmslow)	Kate Bryant	Contact Wilmslow U3A	Weekly
Embroidery (Bramhall)	Dorothy Chesterman	Contact Bramhall U3A	10.00am alternate Wednesdays
English Country Dancing (Wilmslow)	Shan Bristow	Contact Wilmslow U3A	1.30-3.30pm 2 nd and 4 th Mondays in month
Line Dancing (Bramhall)	Chris Chapman	Contact Bramhall U3A	1.30 -3.30 Wednesdays
Personal Image (Bramhall)	Catherine Jones	Contact Bramhall U3A	6-week courses, Thursdays 10.00-12.00
Scottish Country Dancing (Bramhall)	Sheila Bruce-Smith	Contact Bramhall U3A	1.30-3.00pm Fridays Fortnightly
Wine Tasting (Bramhall)	Jenny Richmond	Contact Bramhall U3A	Bi-monthly

Please be sure to let us have any news items and photographs from your group's activities for our Website and Notice Board, via your Group Organiser.

If you are interested in joining any groups, contact the group organiser, or if you are interested in forming a new group, speak to Sandra at General Meetings or email groups@poyntonu3a.org.uk .

Thanks to everybody who has contributed to the current newsletter. If you would like to submit articles or photographs for a future newsletter, please email your contribution to newsletter@poyntonu3a.org.uk or give it to a member of the Newsletter Group. The next copy date for the Poynton U3A Newsletter is June 8th 2017.

Message to all Group Organisers: When you email your group members about arrangements, please send a copy to webmaster@poyntonu3a.org.uk so that we can keep the website up to date. Thank you.

Art Appreciation – Organiser Required

Kath Bell has been organising the Art Appreciation group for some time but unfortunately cannot continue due to ill health. Thanks go to Kath for all her hard work.

There is still an interest being shown in Art Appreciation but an organiser is now required to allow the group to continue.

If you feel you could organise the group but have never run a group before, help is available.

Members' Corner

Walking Netball

Walking netball is a relatively new group, only starting on 31st October 2017. We meet at Poynton Leisure Centre every Tuesday morning 11-12 followed by tea or coffee. It's a wonderful way of getting some exercise with lots of fun, laughter and camaraderie. We have had the benefit of a coach provided by the Leisure Centre to get us started but one of the group has previously done a walking netball course and she will take over as our instructor in the near future.

I remember the first session when I arrived in the reception at the centre wondering who else would be keen enough and keep their promise to be there. Initially there were only two other ladies and the receptionist wouldn't take our £3 fee in case there were not enough to make it viable. Such little faith! Within ten minutes we had sixteen! The group has continued to grow, although at each session there are usually between 12-16 players.



The sessions start off with some basic warm-up exercises followed by shooting practice and team games designed to make us competitive!

We would love to welcome new members of any ability so please get in touch or come along to try it out. Most of us feel that the ball is larger and heavier and the net higher than it was when most of us last played fifty or sixty years ago but perhaps that is the reason why!

Liz Arrowsmith

Christmas Meeting

The front page shows Mike Westbrook who obviously thought he should be in disguise. And who could forget the Biddulph Ukulele Band.



But everybody enjoyed themselves.



Answers to the Photographic Quiz on Page 13 of the last issue. There is a copy of this on the website if you want to look at the pictures again.

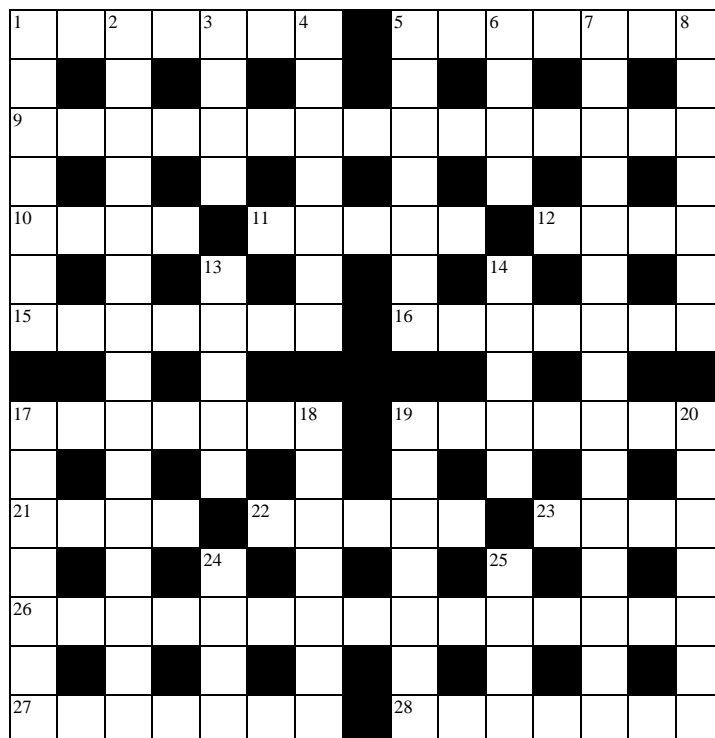
- A. 108 Steps
- B. Middlewood Way, near the "Tesco" roundabout
- C. The Library, formerly a bank
- D. King Edward Street Chapel
- E. Wetherspoons, formerly the home of the Useful Knowledge Society
- F. Bus Station
- G. Silk Museum on Park Lane
- H. Formerly 'The Majestic' cinema on Mill Street
- I. Registry Office, former Macclesfield Free Library

Members' Corner

POYNTON U3A CROSSWORD PUZZLE No.22

ACROSS

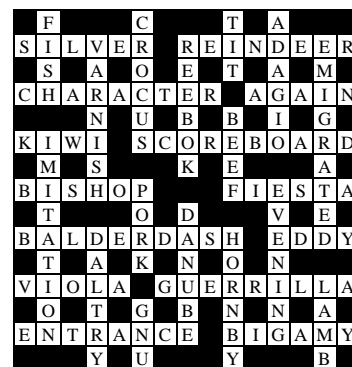
- 1 Suspected Bill and cursed without reason. (7)
 5 Organise group as the French turn back at end of the fen. (7)
 9 Batsman out after being snatched by fiery fielder! (6,3,6)
 10 Mad as monkeys, for instance. (4)
 11 Partners with differing views. (5)
 12 A pair come up with praise. (4)
 15 I hear ringing in part of my jewellery (7)
 16 A poet from Hell? – Yes! That's correct. (7)
 17 Small eagles flying around will live for ever. (7)
 19 Young howler who will probably become a scout later. (4,3)
 21 Scrap a radio talk containing a letter from Greece. (4)
 22 A broken heart will take you to this planet. (5)
 23 Exclude the French from the chalet and take part in the conversation. (4)
 26 Hell. (5,2,3,5)
 27 Man travelling backwards in country, on a short piece of rope. (7)
 28 Part of farm equipment regularly shown in the cinema. (7)



DOWN

- 1 A sideways glance to account for the scone. (7)
 2 Unfit confectioner drops National Front to compete with the treasury. (11,4)
 3 - - - and so holidays take in part of London! (4)
 4 Mixed gin with lard for my sweetheart. (7)
 5 Make amends with Society? – That's lunacy. (7)
 6 Gather in most of the rotten pears. (4)
 7 Mechanical scoop used in the building trade, developed by Charlie Shuvoldy. (9,6)
 8 March 25th celebration showing confused unknown layabout dad. (4,3)
 13 Decided to have it turned around and mostly chopped up. (5)
 14 Answer quietly out to depend on. (5)
 17 A large beer? That sounds just right for the girl. (7)
 18 Street with a very loud editor has a work force. (7)
 19 We hear we should be wary in this Somerset harbour town. (7)
 20 Let Bart get entangled with this warrior! (7)
 24 Massive jewel coming up. (4)
 25 Hide a notion? What more can I say! (4)

Crossword Puzzle No.21 Solution



Compiled by Ed Milius and Ian Berresford of the Poynton U3A Crossword Group. If you would like to join us, contact Ed

Bird Watching

The Bird Watching group have been on several visits over the last few months and taken some excellent photographs. The pictures on the left of the page are from Marbury Country Park (September 2017) and those on the right are from Martin Mere (October 2017). Sometimes it was wet, sometimes it was cold but it was always interesting.



Buzzard



Red Kites



Nuthatch

Poynton Pool – January 2018



Bird Watching Group in Winter Plumage



Lapwing



Blue Tit



Swan