

September 2026 Newsletter

Welcome to the eighth 2026 issue of the Kidsgrove and District u3a Newsletter covering last month's activities. If you have any items you would like to be considered for future publications please forward details to our secretary by email: u3amemsecst7@outlook.com

WEB SITE

We're please to announce that our web site is now recognised by google. Just search Kidsgrove u3a and we're near the top of the list.

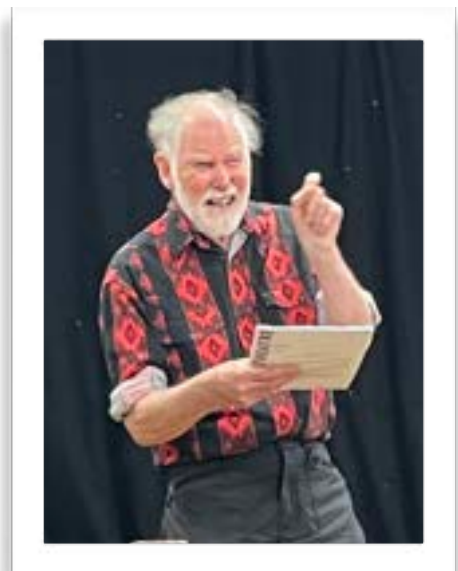
Here you'll find up to date details of all our groups and contacts.

MONTHLY MEETINGS REVIEW

Our monthly meetings are held on the last Tuesday of each month in Kidsgrove Social Club (formerly the Masonic Hall) starting at 1.30pm. All members are welcome.

Hilary Coombes opened our August meeting with a mischievous introduction, announcing the speaker as "someone unknown to us" - it brought a smile to our faces for in the background was our very own Philip Leese, ready to deliver one of his lively, humorous talks.

He began by joking about the torment of choosing a topic, offering us tempting snippets of each abandoned idea before revealing his chosen subject: the anxieties we feel about today's troubling world - war, disasters - both natural and man-made ones - crime, pollution, immigration, global warming and more. With tongue-in-cheek, he claimed these issues "don't really affect us" and that we "can't do anything about them anyway," listing the excuses people and nations use to deny any culpability or responsibility. Although we smiled, we were left wondering how many of these excuses we, ourselves, used!



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Then Philip shifted tone, the joviality diminished. He reminded us that the state of our world does affect each of us - and that each of us should consider how we can reduce our negative impact on our world. His closing appeal was clear: we must set better examples and use any influence we have to encourage others to protect our natural resources.

His light-hearted opening had ended with a strong and unmistakeable moral conclusion - classic Philip, and thoroughly appreciated.

Future events:

29th September - Return visit by Penny Wheat talking about "The Craft of a Silversmith"

27th October - Helen Johnson will be telling us all about Historic Christmas Traditions

November - no meeting this month

1st December - Christmas Party, no need to purchase tickets this year but group leaders are now taking names to assist with catering, **please make sure your name is down if you are coming.**

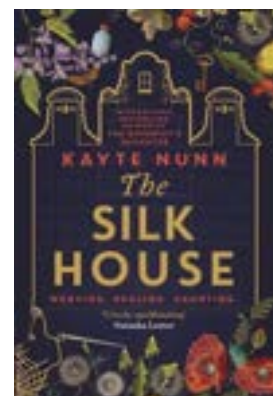
NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

BOOK GROUP

We meet on the last Friday morning of the month at 10.00am at Kidsgrove Library. At the moment the group is unable to accept new members due to book availability at the library but if you are interested in joining please contact Barbara who will put you on a waiting list.

Our book this month was The Silk House by Kayte Nunn.

This was a three person tale of Rowan, a herbalist in the 1700s, Mary-Louise, a silk designer of around the same time, and Thea, a teacher at a private school in current times. The Silk House as a building is the link between all three and leads to an interesting ghost story/mystery to be solved.



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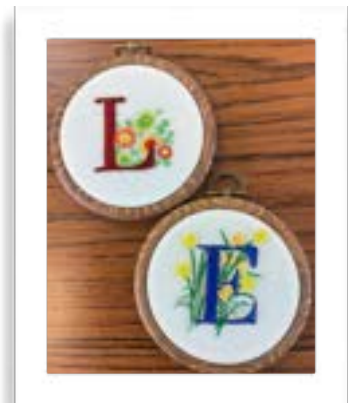
The group enjoyed the writing, with a few comments around minor elements of the plot, mainly a figure that only Thea sees. There were a few red herrings but the end of the story tied most threads together neatly...although there was also the potential for a follow-up book. Overall a good read.

CRAFT GROUP

These last few months the craft group have tried various new projects. Our latest challenges have been pebble art, embroidery and crochet patterns. We have some very talented members in the group who share their knowledge so that we can all learn new techniques. Some with more success than others but who doesn't love a challenge.



Going forward we aim to have our nativity post box topper ready in plenty of time this year. We shall also be doing autumn wreaths, xmas floral displays and cards.



If you feel inspired come and join us, we meet weekly every Monday afternoon at 1.00pm at Butt Lane Community Centre, you'll be made very welcome.

CREATIVE WRITING GROUP

September 8th, we were seven in number and everyone read. We laughed out loud at some members' humorous contributions.

We all shed a tear at Gwyneth's heart rending, emotional memoir which was beautifully written.

Rod reminded us of Alfred Wainwright who was a hugely influential writer on the Lake District and was the author of many walking guides to the area. What an interesting and complex character he was.

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Vivienne read the final chapter of her long spell in hospital after an unfortunate accident on an island in the Caribbean!

If you are tempted to hear more, join us for only £1.00.

The next meeting will be October 13th at 2.00pm in Kidsgrove, Town Hall when the subject will be 'IT love it or hate it.'

PS. IT means information technology not a character from the Addams family, but it's OK if you wish to write about ITT.



LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

We meet on a Tuesday Morning at Kidsgrove Library at 11.00am.

We resumed from the summer break and were treated to a talk about the area around Mow Cop. This was a precursor to the guided tour around Mow Cop which our leader, Philip, was doing as part of National Heritage Open Days week.



A number of members then joined Philip on his Heritage Open Day walk around Mow Cop. The event was very well attended, the Castle car park was full and a group of about 30 from the surrounding areas were waiting for the walk to start. First of all Philip guided us around the Castle telling us about the local Gritstone, how the mound was formed and the history of the Castle. We then enjoyed extensive views across the Cheshire plain as we walked up to the The Old Man of Mow which had been shaped by quarrying many years ago. We continued along Castle Road, then Mow Cop Road to

St Thomas' Church yard where we spent a poignant moment standing around the grave of the giantess Hannah Dale reflecting on the life of the so called 'Wonder Child'. As we continued past 'the Square Chapel' we heard how people came to 'preach on the hill' and the subsequent birth of Methodism and what it was like to live in Mow Cop many years ago. After a brief pause by the old post office and the former Coronation Mill, where many of the local women worked as fustian cutters,

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we proceeded to the final stop off at the Primitive Methodist Chapel where the group was treated to an impromptu tour of the building by the caretaker. As we all know Philip is an excellent guide, his local knowledge is extensive and no question went unanswered! The walk was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Afterwards we were joined by other group members at The Ash for a very enjoyable meal and lots of general chit chat.



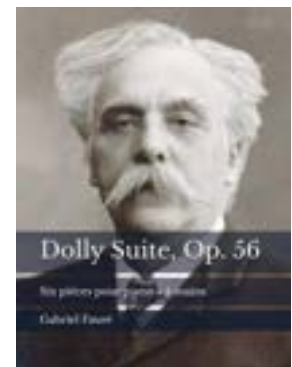
MUSIC APPRECIATION GROUP

We meet fortnightly at 1.30pm at 36 Ravenscliffe Road.

2nd September 2026

"Are you sitting comfortably? Then I'll begin"

This week was D, E and F artists and our new member bought in a very clever example with the theme tune to Watch With Mother, which is actually called the Dolly Suite by Faure.



More Ds were Daniel O'Donnell, D-ream, Don Henley and Duran Duran's dreamy 'Ordinary World'. The Es were covered by the Eagles, East of Eden, and Elgar (a great diversity of styles).

For F we had the contrast of a fairly modern Fratellis track and music from the 1930s French artist Frehel.

We certainly didn't struggle to find appropriate artists as yet again we galloped through 24 tracks. Next time is G,H and I...will that be more of a challenge?

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PHILOSOPHY GROUP

As we start our Autumn term we have a list of topics lined up to keep the "grey matter" active. Lively discussions take place every Thursday 10.00 - 12.00 at Butt Lane Community centre. Over the last month we have considered the Equality Act, Is it fit for purpose? Should it be replaced with an Equity Act? Can identity be created or are we born with our basic character? Does Science give us real knowledge or is its goal to gain power? We finished off with a discussion about Artificial Intelligence. The menu for our Christmas lunch is now available and being circulated. Looking forward to an excellent meal at Fifth on Fourth Bistro, December 3rd will be here before we know it!

Currently around sixteen of us meet together and we welcome new members. Please contact Julie Salisbury for further information 07484846334 or just turn up at the Community Centre on Thursday at 10.00am.

QUIZ GROUP

The August Quiz was held at the Butt Lane Community Centre on 26th August at 1.30pm. The winning team were The Curmedgeuns with a magnificent score of 117, three points more than their nearest rivals who scored 114 points. The winning team were Melanie, Wendy, Colin and Philip.



The answers to last month's brain teasers are:

1. What does a Geiger Counter measure? - *Radiation*
2. Name the Eight Countries that border France - *Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Monaco, Spain, Andorra*
3. What organ in the body stores bile? - *Gallbladder*
4. What are the 3 longest rivers in Britain - *Severn, Thames, Trent*
5. Which shipping line owned the ill fated ship Titanic? - *White Star Line*

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This month's brain teasers are below and the answers will be in next month's newsletter:

1. In which modern day Country is Petra situated?
2. What 4 Countries suffered the most military deaths in WW2?
3. What is the maximum times a piece of paper can be folded in half?
4. What vaccine did Jonas Salk create in 1955?
5. Who were the first 2 explorers to reach the summit of Everest?

The next quizzes will be held on 23rd September and 21st October.

TAI CHI GROUP

We meet weekly every Wednesday morning at 10.00am at Kidsgrove Town Hall.

The aim of this group is to do gentle, slow movements to improve balance, stability and flexibility, improve breathing and well being. The first part of the class focuses on gentle Tai Chi exercises followed by a short yoga section and finishing with the Chen style 18th form Tai Chi.

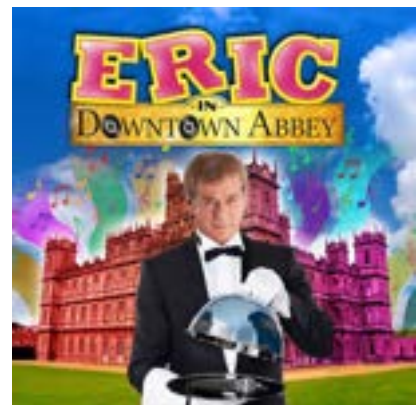


It's pretty much a set routine of gentle exercises a little yoga followed by the tai chi sequence so not a group that has much to report on a monthly basis but anyone is welcome to join whatever their ability.

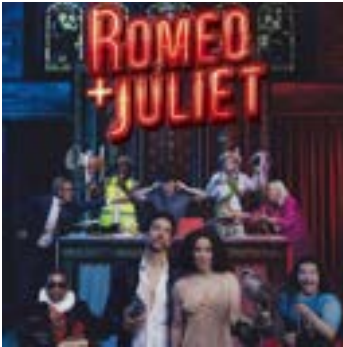
THEATRE GROUP

This month we ventured forth to the New Vic.

Eight of us went to watch the brilliant performance of Eric in Downtown Abbey at the Vic theatre on Saturday evening. The theatre was full to the rafters, the talented actors sang and played several instruments. There was non-stop laughter from the crowd at their wit. It did seem that the cast enjoyed playing it as much as the audience did. A good night had by one and all.



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We're looking forward to our next visit to the New Vic in October to see Romeo and Juliette.

If you're interested in joining future visits you can contact Philip via the link on the theatre group on our website

UKULELE GROUP

We meet weekly every Monday afternoon at 2.30pm at Butt Lane Community Centre.

We have an enjoyable session each week with an average of around 18 members attending. Our aim is to improve our playing and singing, along with a break for tea, biscuits and a natter.

This month we've had a 1950s playlist, we've been Cleaning Windows and had Lipstick on our Collar, we've loaded Sixteen Tons of Number 9 Coal and listened to The Wayward Wind, then we had A Nice Cup of Tea.

If you'd like to have a go at playing the Ukulele, got no experience, come along and give it a try. We've got 2 Ukuleles, provided with a grant from Kidsgrove Town Council, which are free to use. It's not that difficult but its lots of fun.

WALKING GROUPS

SUNDAY STROLLERS

This month we have been to Hanley Forest Park, Astbury Mere, Westport Lake, and our regular check in at Leg o' Mutton.

Luckily we have avoided any precipitation, the sun has smiled on us, with his hat on! Needless to say followed by various refreshments, and then Sunday afternoon football if desired.



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BATHPOOL STROLLERS

We meet every Wednesday morning at 10.00am on the car park at Bathpool Park.

LONGER WALKS

The **Intrepids** have been walking and dining around the local area this month.

25th August

Starting at the Chatterly Whitfield pub they made their way via Goldendale to the Trent and Mersey canal which led them to Westport Lake. Meandering back around the back of Tunstall Park after just under 6 miles to finish back at the pub for lunch.



8th September

This week they were up and around Keele.

Exploring the University grounds, then along Clock House Drive to pass the magnificent Keele Hall. Lunch this week was at The Dick Turpin.



15th September

The **Intrepids** had a change from their usual slog this week as they joined Philip on his history walk around Mow Cop. He described the history of the Castle, Old Man of Mow, the Methodist chapel and the birth of Primitive Methodists, amongst others. (Quarrying for gritstone used for millstones, coal mining, wells etc).

Afterwards they finished with an enjoyable lunch at The Ash in where, inevitably Philip was late - he got talking!

Some comments from fellow *intrepids*:

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"What a turn out really enjoyable walk. Thanks loads"

"Very enjoyable walk and lovely food"



OTHER NEWS

Watch this space, next month we'll have a special competition