

Teesdale

FORUM

April / May 2018

After the Spring we have endured this poem by Wendy Cope
(pardoning her French) is bang on the money:

ENGLISH WEATHER

January's grey and slushy,
February's chill and drear,
March is wild and wet and windy,
April seldom brings much cheer.
In May, a day or two of sunshine,
Three or four in June, perhaps.
July is usually filthy,
August skies are open taps.
In September things start dying,
Then comes cold October mist.
November we make plans to spend
The best part of December p***ed.

From: Cope, W. (1992) *Serious Concerns*. London: Faber and Faber

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Teesdale U3A

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Established March 2007

Founding Chairman: George Jameson

April 2018

Chairman's Letter from Alan Swindale

This will be my last Chairman's letter. I will not repeat here what I have said in my Chairman's Report to the AGM. It has been a privilege to be Chairman and occasionally represent the Teesdale U3A to other groups outside the U3A movement. A monthly committee meeting enables us, the Committee, to pick up any issues arising, to check that we are maintaining our course and filling in all the necessary paperwork.

One bit of paperwork that we finally completed this year was to be formally registered with the Charity Commission. It may therefore seem strange that at the April meeting the Committee decided unanimously that we would no longer claim Gift Aid back from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs.

With Gift Aid the government allows a charity to reclaim the income tax paid by the donor on any gifts to that charity. The key word is GIFTS. The donor should not receive any direct benefit from making the gift. If the charity's purpose is relieving famine in Africa and that is where any donations and membership subscriptions end up then all is fine. However if a membership subscription is collected to provide free or subsidised entrance to a monthly educational talk then the subscription can hardly be considered a simple gift.

The subject is not simple and different U3As come to different conclusions but the Committee, acting as Trustees of the Teesdale U3A, decided that we were not justified in claiming a Gift Aid refund on subscriptions paid to the Teesdale U3A and would not do so.

And so to a new year. Best wishes to you all.

Alan

Teesdale U3A Monthly Meeting
Fourth Thursday of the month

(unless indicated otherwise) at **The Witham** Barnard Castle
Meetings assemble from 10.00, for a prompt start at 10.30

Guests are welcome to attend one of our meetings as a 'taster' before deciding whether to join. An admission fee, currently £1, covers room hire costs. Children under 18 are NOT allowed to partake in group activities as guests, as they would not be covered by our insurance.

Next meeting

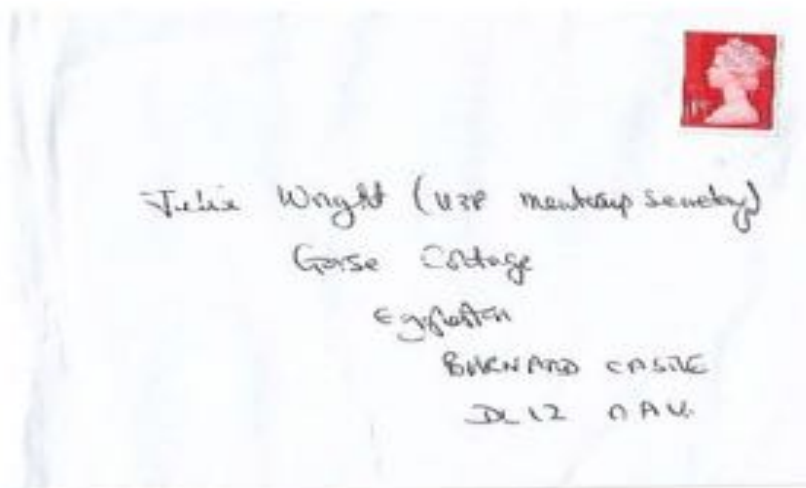
24 May: Gerald Blake *The Surprising Geography of the Holy Land*
Far from being a "land flowing with milk and honey" the Palestine of the Bible was a busy, dangerous, and unsettling land. The environment was demanding, and the land was rarely left alone by the neighbourhood bullies.

From MemSec

HELP! Having solved the previous mystery cheque I have now had an empty envelope.

I suspect this may have been posted in error - I hope so - but if it had money in it and a note of who it was from we need to chase the PO. Please let me know asap if it is your handwriting

Julia



March U3A Monthly Meeting – Report by Tim Meacham

Buried Textile Treasures: Discoveries from Medieval Egypt

Jacqui Hyman

Jacqui began by setting the scene for her interest in textiles from Egyptian burials of the Mamluk period. Following her first degree at Leeds an opportunity arose to look in depth at finds from this lesser-known era (long after the more celebrated Pharaonic and Roman periods). Emerging from the weakening of the Ayyubid realm in Egypt in the second half of the 13thC AD and dominating until 1517, the Mamluk dynasty, originating from ex-slaves, developed into the greatest Islamic empire of the later Middle Ages; its capital, Cairo, became the economic, cultural, and artistic centre of the Arab Islamic world.

Mamluk burial practices were as elaborate in their way as the earlier Pharaonic interments, presenting the bodies of the dead in their 'Sunday best' clothing to ensure their positive reception into the next life. Throughout the 19thC, thousands of their graves were desecrated by treasure hunters, attracted by the fine materials and rich patterning of the burial clothes. Public disquiet led to the appointment of Flinders Petrie in 1882 to prevent the dispersal and loss of such important historical material, but it was his assistant, Percy Newberry, whose activities provided the main examples for Jacqui's talk. Assisted by his wife Essie, Newberry, a botanist by trade, retrieved a number of examples of Islamic clothing from the rubbish mounds created by the treasure hunters. Government funding was unavailable but donations from museums in north west England supported him in carrying out his research. In gratitude Newberry passed examples to these museums, including six items that Jacqui worked on.

These four tunics and two hats, from children who had met untimely deaths, lay untouched in a box at Leeds University Museum of Textiles from 1933 until 2008, deteriorating through the effects of dirt, damp and bodily fluids. Three years of painstaking effort were required to clean, conserve and study this clothing. The hats had been squashed flat at the bottom of the box. When first examined, after lengthy rehydration to prevent them from disintegrating, both seemed similar, but after further careful cleaning, and examination by advanced microscope, one was found to have considerable quantities of gold included in the weave. A child's silk waistcoat, made from material found only in China evidenced medieval trade routes.

Glen Howard proposed the vote of thanks and the Chairman had to cut short a plethora of questions which bore witness both to Jacqui's love for her subject and the interest aroused by her clear and detailed delivery.

Art Appreciation Group

April 2018 Report by Roger Stanyon

At the April meeting we studied the Spanish artist Pablo Picasso (1881-1973) who has had enormous influence on 20th century art and worked in an unprecedented variety of styles. His career is therefore often categorized into distinct periods, starting in 1901 with his "Blue Period" then the "Rose Period" (1904-1906) and the "African-influenced Period" (1907-1909), etc. The current exhibition at the Tate Modern ***Picasso 1932 - Love, Fame, Tragedy*** covers a pivotal period ("years of wonders"), in Picasso's life when his paintings reached a new level of sensuality during his passionate love affair with the 17 year old Marie-Thérèse Walter, 28 years his junior.

We watched *Picasso*, a powerful film from the BBC documentary series *Power of Art*, written and presented by the art historian Simon Schama, who is currently University Professor of Art History and History at Columbia University, New York. Schama recounts the high drama behind the story of Picasso's epic *Guernica* (1937) looking at both the Nazi bombing massacre that inspired the painting and Picasso's extraordinary artistic response just after the years of his life in the early 1930s shown by the current exhibition. We also looked at a short film of El Greco (1541-1614).

Picasso was born on October 25, 1881 in the Andalusian city of Malaga, Spain and his father was a painter and art teacher. From an early age Picasso showed talent to draw and paint, initially being taught by his father at La Coruña and Barcelona. He also went to Madrid's Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando, Spain's foremost art school, but he disliked the formal instruction and soon stopped attending classes. However it is in Madrid Picasso first admired the works of El Greco which are echoed in Picasso's later work. In 1904 when he was 23 he moved to Paris where he lived for much of his life until after the Second World War.

In the film Simon Schama shows how Pablo Picasso, the pleasure-seeking leader of Paris' bohemian painting scene, who for decades had created pioneering modern art, came to paint his powerful evocation of the horror of war *Guernica*.

The Spanish Civil War started in July 1936 when the Spanish army led by General Francisco Franco, aided by Mussolini's Fascist Italy and Hitler's Nazi Germany, rose up against the democratically elected Republican government, presided over by Manuel Azaña. On April 26, 1937 the German Luftwaffe totally destroyed the Basque town Guernica at the request General Francisco Franco. In January 1937, the Spanish Republican government commissioned Picasso to create a mural for the Spanish display at the

1937 World's Fair in Paris. After reading eye-witness reports of the bombing of Guernica, particularly by war correspondent George Steer, Picasso decided to paint a picture depicting the horrors of war. His images were inspired by his compatriot Goya's nightmarish war images which he brought into modern art with various styles, particularly cubism. The painting is oil on canvas and only uses a palette of gray, black and white. The picture is 3.5 metre (11 ft.) tall and 7.8 metre (25 ft. 6in.) wide and now in a purpose-built gallery in the Museo Reina Sofia in Madrid.



Pablo Picasso, *Guernica*, 1937, Museo Reina Sofia, Madrid

Next meeting: 2.00pm at The Jersey Farm on Wednesday, May 2, 2018 when we will be looking at the Dutch artist Hieronymus Bosch.

Meeting on 4 July will be a visit to **LEEDS ART GALLERY AND BENINGBROUGH HALL. Itinerary:**

8.45 leave Barnard Castle: Join Hodgsons coach at Addisons

10.00 arr. Leeds Art Gallery. Coffee and scones.

Introduction to Gallery and exhibitions by staff member

12.45 Cold Buffet Lunch, tea and coffee

1.45 Board coach for Beningbrough Hall

2.15 Arr. Beningbrough Hall. Entrance to Hall and Gardens £10.80 (free to National Trust members)

4.45 Leave for B/Castle

6.00 Arr. B/C

CHEQUE FOR £24 TO TEESDALE NO.2 ACCT. Send to Elizabeth Formstone, Bridge House, Piercebridge, Darlington DL2 3SG Tel: 01325 374727. Please enclose your address and phone number with email if available. PLEASE SAY IF YOU ARE A NATIONAL TRUST MEMBER

Bird Watching Group

Report by Anne Harbron

Well, first we had the snow to contend with and then, in April the rain arrived as more than just April showers.

For our first visit in April we tried to go to Fairburn Ings RSPB Reserve. I even checked on their website the night before and looked for closed roads as a result of flooding before we set off. All to no avail; by 10.00 in the morning, as we arrived, the site was completely flooded and only the Visitor Centre was accessible. The first swallows and martins were swooping over the water, but we could only stand at a safe distance and watch. Fortunately all was not lost. Ten minutes up the road is the new St Aidan's RSPB Reserve, at the appropriately named Swillington Ings. (It seems an Ing is a wet area likely to flood in winter).

When you arrive there the first amazing thing is the enormous walking dragline called Oddball, left on site and probably responsible for all the water-absorbing lagoons on this very different reserve. Many of the pathways have hard surfaces and lead you, at length, not to hides but hither and thither amongst the rush fringed lagoons. In all we saw nearly 50 species including our first wheatear of the year. Star of the day, and a big attraction for that reserve, were the black necked grebes. We had seen one in winter plumage in Scarborough Harbour last year, a lonely little black and white fellow. You would not think these were the same species. Their black heads were adorned with striking yellow spring plumage and whilst some contented themselves with diving for food, others were more interested in courtship routines and battles for supremacy. There is footage of them taken by John Howard on the site

<http://machaven.co.uk/birdingU3A/>

At the time he was struggling with a malfunctioning tripod so he did well to get the footage shown. What we didn't see but certainly heard, were the bitterns booming. If you haven't heard this distinctive sound it is exactly the sound we used to make at school when we blew across the top of our empty milk bottles.

The state of the season meant that all previously made programme plans had been thrown away and for the second April visit we took another all day visit. We went back to Fairburn Ings. This time we notched up over 50 species amongst us. One of us heard a cuckoo, another heard a bittern

again. We all heard the green woodpecker and one member saw it fly straight across in front of me whilst I was actually looking the other way.

The willow warblers had all arrived in force and were lustily singing their easily recognised song with its descending notes. The chiff-chaffs were back, living up to their onomatopoeic names and for many of the party there was a fine view of a warbling male blackcap. On the feeders there were brilliantly coloured bullfinches feeding along with goldfinches, greenfinches, chaffinches, a reed bunting and lots of tree sparrows.

Our aim of the day was to walk to the top of the restored coal tips and look down on the nesting birds in the heronry. This is now a beautiful walk with splendid views across country. Lagoons and tree plantings combine to make old slag heaps a wonderful place for wildlife and people. On the first lagoon Chris quickly spotted more black necked grebes along with pochard, gadwall, tufted duck and coot. From further along we looked down on the heronry where it always seems strange to see these huge birds on nests in trees. The cormorants were nesting in adjacent trees and on the single tall remnants of an old castle which is now just an island in the water. Egrets were evident, one in a tree and others beside the lagoons but we were not lucky enough to spot any spoonbills, which have been regularly reported from this spot. Our total number for the day climbed up as we saw goldeneye, shovelers, shelduck and a pair of weird looking Egyptian geese from our vantage point. Some of the party then strolled back beside the River Aire which they reported to be strewn with plastic waste. The rest of us wandered back along the top of the coal tips looking down at the river. The helmsman of a passing barge spotted us and waved cheerfully as he tootled a greeting on the boat's horn. I'm not sure you are supposed to do that but really it was so pleasantly sunny after so much drab gloom that birds and people were all celebrating the joy of spring, for a day at least.

The **next two visits** will probably be local ones to make up for two back-to-back longer distance ones. Members, as usual, will be informed by email as to our destinations. To enquire about the group leave a message with Anne on 07583034849. Members need waterproof shoes, some binoculars and plenty of optimism.

Notes from the edge...

The end of March - 25th - I walked up the fell this morning to check on the birds at change-over. It is the time of year when the Mistle Thrush sings from the top of a tree next door, the Woodpecker shouts his territory and Starlings pretend to be Curlews or Buzzards, depending on whim. The waders are back and the winter visitors have not gone yet - a time to know that Spring is on the way - whatever the weather!



For me, the Curlew is the true harbinger and I have been hearing them for a couple of weeks now. They are settling on the fell, and so are the Peewits, Oystercatchers, Snipe and Meadow Pipits - Peewits dancing above my head, Snipe muttering in the rushes. And a slim darkish raptor dashed past and over the bank - a Merlin perhaps.

A dozen and more Greylag are setting up territory in the meadows up there and as I walked back a flock of Fieldfare chattered their way from field to tree - still here at the moment - and so are the Brambling and Siskin, which come to the feeders.

The treat of the snow last weekend was a pair of Woodcock sheltering under a gorse bush and coming out throughout the storm to forage, and I have seen them flying over since. As for house hunters - Starlings checking all available boxes, Tits looking about too, and the Nuthatch having a thorough investigation. So it might snow again over Easter - but the clocks have leaped forward and the days are longer. Hooray for Spring!

JW

Book Group Two

Report by Elizabeth Long

Future Meetings: usually every 2 months on the second Monday in the month although this can vary.

Monday 14 May

Monday 9 July at 2pm

Contact: Elizabeth Long on 01833 641494 or book2@teesdaleu3a.org.uk

Room to Read (Book Group 3)

March Report by all of us: *Mothering Sunday* by Graham Swift

This book was a welcome change for all of us after slogging through last month's hefty Wildfell Hall. It was short! And it was quite low-key in comparison to gothic melodrama. The style is spare and intensively detailed, concerning the events of one day, Mothering Sunday, when a motherless girl meets her soon-to-be-married-to-another lover for the last time.

The novel leaves many questions, and opens many lines of conjecture, it fails to give "closure", it invites speculation, interpretation, and choices about preferred outcomes.

It is novel of two halves in which the first delivers the plot - or as much of it as you're going to get - and the second part essentially questions the role of the writer in fiction. The first half has a number of grand themes: the nature of social class in post First World War England, how families cope with the grief from loss of their children and brothers in that war, what depth can relationships have in a post-war uncertain world. The second half was experienced by us as somewhat obtuse and less accessible, exploring the (unlikely) development of the motherless girl into a successful author, a woman at ease with "what ifs" and what might have been:

"Telling stories, telling tales. Always the implication that you were trading in lies. But for her, it would always be the task of getting to the quick, the heart, the nub, the pith: the trade of truth telling." (2016, p148)

We gave it a good 4 for Book Group discussability, and a 3 out of 5 on the recommending to others scale.

April Report by Annie Clouston: *Good Omens* by Terry Pratchett and Neil Gaiman

Sci-Fi Fantasy was a new genre of fiction for most of us in the group. A 1980s collaboration between the two authors, it prompted a discussion about how easy it would be to write in such a way, particularly before the advent of super fast e-communication (what would that be? asks a Barny resident). The collaboration appears quite seamless, and it is obvious that the writers were on song together, with a similar sense of humour and of the absurd.

Whilst one of our members who loved it likened the novel to watching Ken Dodd in his prime, ie laughing so much you could miss the next joke, another of us compared it to listening to the latest incarnation of *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* on Radio 4. It was very funny the first time round, but fashions in culture and humour have changed, we have changed, and it just doesn't seem quite so brilliantly anarchic and innovative anymore. Another of us had checked out reviews on the net and found a synopsis of discussion by an American book group that had hated the British sense of humour and its Pythonesque undertones, but had found deep and meaningful themes within the book that raised issues about free will and predestination.

Undoubtedly the authors intended to make their readers think about what humans contribute to their self-destruction—sleepwalking to Armageddon and all that – and there is reference to *The Second Coming* a poem by W B Yeats (reproduced below) in the closing lines of the book: “imagine a figure, half angel, half devil, all human ... slouching hopefully towards Tadfield... For ever.”

We agreed that the characterisation was good and the writing was accomplished within its genre. It demanded a good deal of effort to keep up with the constant switching about in the plot line and the list of characters was long and confusing. The general consensus was that, if you are not an avid sci-fi fantacist, you needed to be in the right mood to appreciate it.

Average scores on the doors: Book Group Discussability 3.5 out of 5, Recommending to others, 2.5 out of 5.

Next Meetings:

Wednesday 16 May, *Maus* (graphic novel) by Art Spiegelman

20 June, *Our Country's Good* by Timberlake Wertenbaker

18 July, *The Power* by Naomi Alderman

The Second Coming
by W B Yeats

Turning and turning in the widening gyre
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.

Surely some revelation is at hand;
Surely the Second Coming is at hand.
The Second Coming! Hardly are those words out
When a vast image out of Spiritus Mundi
Troubles my sight: somewhere in sands of the desert
A shape with lion body and the head of a man,
A gaze blank and pitiless as the sun,
Is moving its slow thighs, while all about it
Reel shadows of the indignant desert birds.
The darkness drops again; but now I know
That twenty centuries of stony sleep
Were vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle,
And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,
Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Second_Coming_\(poem\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Second_Coming_(poem))

DISCUSSION GROUP

April 2018 Meeting—Report by Glen Howard

Almost a full house this month which led to very stimulating discussions. Topics from the news that were aired included: the dismissal of a midwife (possibly because she wasn't afraid to draw attention to problems); the fact that you never hear the ending of a news story, only the beginning; A & E in the North is the best in the country; the value of productivity; and care costs and paying for them.

Euthanasia was our main topic and led to a very wide ranging discussion including the desirability of sorting out Lasting Power of Attorney details and Advance Directives.

The topic for our next meeting on Friday 11th May 2018 will be "New Words and Changes of Meaning"

New members are always welcome so if you would like to join us, please give me a ring on 01833 631639.

French Conversation

Report by Stella Kirton

The March meeting was convened by Annie Woodward and I presented an outline of "The Suffragette Movement in France" which aimed not only to obtain for women the right to vote but also to ensure that their voices would be heard much more clearly in many other arenas! Every man present made sure he paid careful attention and there was not a single interruption!

LE MOUVEMENT DES SUFFRAGETTES EN FRANCE

Le terme de "suffragette" apparaît en 1903 en Angleterre. La première à l'employer est Emmeline PANKHURST à Manchester. Il désigne les féministes souhaitant une évolution dans l'égalité homme/femme. Ces femmes qui revendiquent des droits nouveaux s'inspirent des idées de la Révolution Française, pour faire évoluer la condition, les droits et les pouvoirs des femmes.

A l'origine, la création du mouvement suffragiste s'était fondé autour des revendications pour le droit de vote, mais ce n'était pas une priorité en soit, ce que revendiquait les femmes de l'époque c'était l'autonomie (égalité

des droits civils), le droit à l'éducation, la lutte contre la prostitution, l'amélioration du sort des travailleuses, etc... Elles revendiquent plus de droits politiques pour réaliser l'extension des autres droits des femmes.

Ces revendications politiques se traduisent en 1925 par l'élection de dix candidates féministes aux élections municipales, ce qui marque un tournant dans la vie politique française. Une nouvelle étape est franchie avec la nomination en 1936 au poste de sous secrétaire d'état de Mmes BRUNSCHVIG, LACORE et JOLIOT-CURIE. Et c'est en 1944 suite à leurs actions durant la seconde guerre mondiale que le droit de vote des femmes leur est accordé.

Les combats suffragistes sont considérés comme hors normes par rapport aux mentalités et aux conventions culturelles de l'époque. En effet, les femmes sont considérées comme inférieures physiquement et psychologiquement. Elles ne pouvaient, par conséquent, avoir les mêmes droits que les hommes, selon la logique de l'époque. De plus, l'opinion publique craignait une incompatibilité du rôle mère-électrice. Le vote des femmes serait irresponsable ; selon eux, il ne pourrait que permettre le développement des partis extrêmes, ceci justifié par le manque de maturité politique des femmes. Il se crée alors des ligues anti-suffragistes qui regroupent de nombreux hommes mais aussi quelques femmes, souvent issues des milieux populaires. Cependant, le rôle capital joué par les femmes pendant les deux guerres mondiales dans l'industrie et l'économie a largement contribué aux changements des mentalités. Ce sont de nombreux préjugés qui fondaient la base de l'organisation sociale qui se trouvent être remis en question.

Les suffragettes sont souvent des aristocrates, mais elles ne symbolisent pas l'ensemble des femmes: les ouvrières leur contestent le droit de parler en leur nom, voyant le vote comme une revendication bourgeoise.

Hubertine AUCLERT fonde en 1881 la "Citoyenne", première organe des suffragettes en France et invente la propagande féministe dès 1916. En 1908 elle renverse par provocation une urne.

Madeleine PELLETIER: principale animatrice du mouvement suffragiste français au début du siècle, brise les vitres d'un bureau de vote en 1908 mais n'est jamais poursuivie.

Louise WEISS se lance en 1934 dans la lutte pour le droit de vote des femmes faisant le choix d'actions médiatiques : elle utilise l'actualité à des fins de propagande féministe et fait preuve d'imagination. Elle convainc les trois plus grandes aviatrices françaises de participer à un meeting à Bordeaux en faveur du suffrage des femmes ; lors de la finale de la coupe de

Continued overleaf...

France de football, elle lâche des petits ballons rouges auxquels sont attachés des tracts féministes que le vent entraîne jusqu'à la tribune présidentielle ; elle retarde aussi le départ d'un grand prix en se promenant accompagnée d'autres suffragettes sur la piste avec des banderoles

En définitive, malgré de fortes revendications et des actions souvent violentes le fossé homme-femme est toujours présent en France. Cependant, les suffragettes par l'intermédiaire de leurs actions et de leurs revendications durant la 3ème République ont en partie obtenu des avancées sociales, familiales et culturelles.

La situation dans quelques pays étrangers

Pays	Année d'acquisition du droit de vote féminin	Critères de vote
Grande-Bretagne	1918	Obtention du droit de vote à 30 ans
	1928	Obtention du droit de vote à 21 ans
Russie	1864	Obtention de droit de vote uniquement pour les élections locales
Norvège	1911	Elles sont éligibles à l'Assemblée Nationale
	1913	Obtention du droit de vote pour toutes

Translation: The Suffragette Movement in France

The term "suffragette" appeared in 1903 in England. The first to use it was Emmeline PANKHURST in Manchester. It refers to feminists who wanted an evolution in male-female equality. These women were inspired by the ideas of the French Revolution to improve the rights and powers of women.

Originally, the creation of the suffragette movement was based around the demands for the right to vote, but it was not a priority in itself. What the women of the time claimed was autonomy (equality of civil rights), the right to education, the fight against prostitution, the improvement of the lot of women workers, etc. They were demanding more political clout as the means for achieving the extension of other women's rights.

In 1925, these political demands resulted in the election of ten women candidates in the municipal elections, marking a turning point in French political life. A new step was taken with the appointment in 1936 to the position of Under Secretary of State of Mesdames BRUNSCHVICG, LACORE and JOLIOT-CURIE. And it is in 1944 following their contributions to the second world war effort that the right to vote is granted to women.

The suffragette campaigns are considered to be out of the ordinary in relation to the attitudes and cultural conventions of the time. Indeed, women were considered inferior physically and psychologically. They could not therefore have the same rights as men, according to the logic of the time. In addition, public opinion feared incompatibility of the mother-voter role. The vote of women was widely thought likely to engender the development of extremist parties as the result of their lack of political maturity. This led to the emergence of anti-suffragette leagues that included many men but also some women, often from modest social backgrounds. However, the crucial role played by women during the two world wars in industry and the economy contributed to substantial changes in attitude. These many prejudices, which formed the basis of the social structure, were being questioned and challenged.

Suffragettes were often aristocrats and were not representative of all women. As a result, working class women disputed the assumed right to speak on their behalf as they saw the vote as a bourgeois matter.

In 1881, **Hubertine AUCLERT** founded the "Citoyenne", the first publication for suffragettes in France, and invented feminist propaganda as early as 1916. In 1908 she overturned a ballot box in protest.

Madeleine PELLETIER : principal animator of the French suffragettes movement at the beginning of the century, broke the windows of a polling station in 1908 but was never prosecuted.

Louise WEISS launched in 1934 media action by using the news for the purposes of persuasive feminist propaganda. She persuaded three famous French female aviators to take part in a meeting in Bordeaux in favour of the right of women to vote. During the final of the French football cup, she released small red balloons to which were attached feminist leaflets that the wind carried to the presidential platform. She also delayed the start of a grand prix by walking with other suffragettes on the track with banners.

In the end, despite strong claims and often violent actions, the gender gap is still present in France. However, the suffragettes through their actions and their demands during the 3rd Republic have achieved progress with social, family and cultural improvements.

Next meeting. Straight after the Thursday monthly meeting at Penny's Café near the Market Cross. Levels of fluency vary but all are most welcome to join us. The April topic will be "Les vacances Projetées".

Gardening Group

Report for April by Pauline Fawcett

After having to cancel the March meeting due to bad weather conditions our April meeting went ahead as planned with a bumper 47 members turning out to listen to Ian Findlay talk about The Flora of Upper Teesdale.

Ian lives in Forrest-in-Teesdale and spent 32 years in the Teesdale and Weardale Mountain Rescue Team as well as being Conservation Officer for Upper Teesdale with the Nature Conservancy Council for many years, so he knows Upper Teesdale like the back of his hand.

The talk was split into 6 different sections -woodland, pasture, hay meadows, moorland, wetland and riverside and limestone grassland and touched many different aspect of the area (i.e. history and geology). Ian reminded us all how special Upper Teesdale is, not only for its rare plants - Birdseye Primrose, Teesdale Violet, Blue Gentian and Teesdale Sandwort, but the number of species of grasses found there – 40 and much more. It was a wonderful talk and a great reminder of the beautiful countryside we have on our doorstep.

Thanks to everyone who helped with refreshments and tidying up the room.

Next meetings:

Friday, 4th May

Helmsley Walled garden, and Farndale - CANCELLED – Due to an error at HMG. We are looking into an alternative garden to visit or a different date for Helmsley.

Friday, 1st June

Mirehouse, Keswick, includes guided tour of the house. By coach.

Friday, 6th July

Broaches Farm and Lowbridge House, Dalton. Swale Cottage, Richmond, with free time in Richmond for lunch. By car.

Friday, 3rd August

Belsay Hall, Castle and gardens, Northumberland. By coach. Free entry to English Heritage members.

Friday, 7th September

Scampston Hall, Malton. By coach.

For Further details contact Pauline on 01833 638020 or pvfawcett@tiscali.co.uk

Genealogy

April Report by Alan Swindale – ‘Genetic Genealogy – The scientific background’

The talk lasted just over two hours – even the wall clock stopped to listen!
The following summary is obviously greatly simplified!

A human genome consists of just 23 pairs of chromosomes. Each of these chromosomes has the ability to duplicate itself in the process of cell formation and replicas of these 23 pairs of chromosomes are found in every cell of the human body. Occasionally errors in the duplication process occur for various reasons and if these occur in the germ cells – the ova or the sperm – they will be reproduced in every cell of any child resulting from the successful fertilisation of the ova by the sperm. Such changes are named mutations. The vast majority of mutations are harmless and have no observable effect. On average every child has around 60 such mutations relative to its parents. These mutations have become part of the child’s genome and will be passed down in turn to its descendants. Each mutation effectively becomes a marker on the genome and anyone whose genome is marked in the same manner at the same point knows that they are related - except that the same mutation may independently occur in another child. However a particular combination of mutations will effectively be unique.

A sample of DNA from an individual is obtained, usually as a cheek swab or as saliva, and sent off to a test laboratory. Clever biochemistry and an automated test process with similarities to semiconductor manufacture enable the code of the genome to be read. To reduce cost this is limited to regions of the genome where analysis is expected to be fruitful. The decoded DNA can then be compared with samples from other individuals to see if there is a matched pattern of mutations. If there is such a match then the two individuals are likely to be related. The total length that matches indicates how close the relationship is likely to be.

Next meeting: In May we will follow up this talk with “Genetic Genealogy – Interpreting DNA test results”. The meeting will be, as usual, on the first Thursday of the month, that is May 3rd, at 2:00 pm in the Dales Room at Enterprise House.

Alan Swindale genealogy@teesdaleu3a.org.uk 01388488348

GEOLOGY GROUP

***Rocks in the Field - The North Antrim Coast* Report by Moss Hardy**

We started the March meeting, as usual, with a general review of any earthquake or volcanic activity around the world. This had been a relatively quiet month with the only significant quake being the 7.5 magnitude tremor that hit Papua New Guinea at the start of the month. One hundred lives were lost in the initial shock and a strong aftershock which followed. Several reports were selected by Trevor for discussion, starting with one on the Yellowstone Park supervolcano. This very large volcanic area continues to be active and of concern. The park sits on two large magma chambers, one below the other which could erupt at some time. Currently most of the activity is steam and mud geysers. A proposal to drill down into the water bearing seal above the magma and pump in more water is being considered. It is suggested that the extra water would react with the magma to form a hard rock seal over the chamber. This seems to most of us to be a very risky operation if it goes ahead. Another report suggested that managed forests could limit earthquake damage. It has been observed that trees fall at right angles to the earthquake wave motion. The root patterns of closely spaced trees could hold the ground and reduce the amount of landslip.

An interesting article was found in the scientific press which described the discovery of a feathered dinosaur in China. The feathers were well preserved and appear to have been very colourful.

Before the coffee break Trevor gave us a resume of some of the technical terms which are used in the Open University DVD which was to follow. The DVD recorded a field trip on the North Antrim coast in which we would encounter Igneous, Metamorphic and Sedimentary rocks exposed along the foreshore and the almost vertical cliffs behind.

This area is famous for its thick almost horizontal volcanic sill of Basalt which forms the cliff face and which has a characteristic columnar structure. The columns are mostly hexagonal in cross section and have either a convex or concave top to each column. Sills are the horizontal lava flows whereas Dykes are the vertical intrusions. Geologists refer to surface flows as lava and beneath the surface as magma, same thing just different position. So Dykes are intrusive but Sills can be intrusive and extrusive.

This lava is Mafic, that is rich in Pyroxene, Olivine and Calcium rich Plagioclase minerals which are mostly dark coloured, hence the black/dark grey basalts. The Basalts are fine grained due to the fast cooling.

The rocks surrounding a volcanic intrusion are known as the Country rock and these are altered by the heat of the magma forming a Metamorphic Aureole which is a zone that separates the intrusion from the unaltered country rock. This alteration can be recrystallization or reorientation of the minerals or both. This zone of alteration associated with dykes and sills may not be very thick but where we encounter, usually at depth, large plutons of magma the alteration can be much more extensive.

Above the exposed sill can be seen several zones of weathering of the basalt. The minerals in the basalt are altered by sub-aerial exposure to red Laterites and grey Kaolinite and Bauxite.

Why not come and join us at our **next meetings**:-

Monday 23rd April – Field Trip to Bowlees Visitor Centre 10.00 to see William Smith's Map, the first comprehensive stratigraphical map of England "the Map That Changed the World".

Mon May 21st -Deep Sea Mining –A run around the Abyssal Plain + Turbidites, TM

Contact:- Barry, Convenor, 01833 638293, pbeecook@btinternet.com
Trevor Morse, Leader, 01833 638893, morse329@btinternet

REGIONAL GEOGRAPHY QUIZ

THE TEAM: Phil Clarke (captain), Annie Clouston, Ian Hodgson and Chris Walker, had a very close and tense away match against Bedale U3A. Nails were bitten, sweaty brows were mopped, and it was taken to the wire. At the end of the penultimate round Bedale were 2 points ahead. Did we chuck in the towel? Not a bit of it ...

VICTORY in the third round 113 points to 110.

The Final: We play HEXHAM in May, date and venue tba.

Historic Environment Group

April Report by Tim Meacham

For the April meeting our member Roger Redfearn took us on a 'Tour of Teesdale', focusing on the villages and sites on and around the B6277 in Upper Teesdale, an area inhabited for generations past by Roger's family. He provided a commentary combining deep emotion and knowledge to accompany a priceless collection of slides of the district. After a brief look at the history of Barnard Castle we were introduced to the three manor houses (Shipley, Eggleston and Stotley) whose families held sway over the more remote villages beyond. Roger then showed some interesting old shots of Middleton town, including an early picture of one of the first national Cooperative Society buildings as well as a street view revealing open countryside where now rows of buildings stand.

We then moved up to Holwick and Newbiggin, both much larger settlements in Roger's early days than at the present time. We met churches, chapels, schools and homes of the elite and working class inhabitants alike. Many of the buildings have now disappeared; the few remaining tend to have been changed significantly, sometimes beyond recognition. Passing High Force (with pictures of a royal visit and the horse-drawn Charabanc coach which brought in the early tourists), we reached some of the outlying villages near the Teesdale - Cumbria border.

Roger spoke of members of his family who for 42 years ran the Forest Post Office and showed a picture of himself proudly displaying the three British Empire Medals awarded to his father and two aunts for their distinguished service. All in all the 67 slides gave a real feeling of what these villages were like in their heydays.

Details of our **next meeting** (Thursday May 10th), are still being finalised and will be sent to members very soon. Anyone else who would like to join our mailing list is invited to contact Tim Meacham by phone or email (see elsewhere in this Forum). As ever, new members will be most welcome.



THE ROTARY CLUB OF BARNARD CASTLE

Invites U3A members to hear a talk - **The Rise and Fall of the Provincial Jewish Communities in Britain - with a focus on the North-East**

Our Speaker David Newman OBE is professor of Geopolitics at **Ben-Gurion University in Israel** where he has lived since 1982. He studied for his Ph.D at the University of Durham between 1979-1982, during which period he lived in Newcastle and was an active member of the local Jewish community.

David will discuss the growth and decline of provincial Jewry, the reason why certain communities grew and others did not, and the degree to which they became an integral part of their local communities before eventually declining and moving on elsewhere.

The Jewish community in Britain today numbers approximately 250-300,000 people. At its peak in the post WWII period, it reached some 410-420,000. The major influx of Jews to the United Kingdom occurred in the late nineteenth century, following mass migration from Eastern Europe in the face of persecution and pogroms. While the majority of refugees arrived in North America, large groups came to Britain, creating new, and strengthening existing small communities.

Barnard Castle School, Barnard Castle on Thursday 3 May 2018

Doors Open at 6:30PM

Starts at 7:00PM

Ticket Price: £8.50 - Online Tickets www.ticketsource.co.uk/date/476975

Online booking fee applies



or from C Michael Hanby 8, Galgate Barnard Castle Tel. 01833 638287

or Email ianhodgson@gmail.com

Raising Funds for the MRI Scanner Appeal for Darlington

& Bishop Auckland Hospitals & Rotary Charities.

iPad Group

April report by Rita Wheeler

This was a small, but very busy and enjoyable meeting in which we learnt, or revised a lot. It is surprising how, even if you have been using an iPad for years, you can find that something other people think is basic, is quite a new and welcome surprise to you.

We covered the following topics.

- ◆ Facebook - how to make sure your communications remain restricted to the people you have chosen
- ◆ sending an email to a number of people Cc or Bcc
- ◆ Sending a group message from iPad, and also a free app Mailchimp, useful for sending to very large numbers of people
- ◆ Facetime, again free, like Skype but available only if both devices, the sender's and the receiver's, are Apple
- ◆ saving the results of web searches
- ◆ cancelling the history of web searches - why do it, and how do you do it?

Google Photos – another free app which accepts an almost unlimited number of photos, and also can be used to delete pictures, leaving only text if, for example, you find an illustrated notice from which you require the information but not the pictures.

Because several members are going to be away for the next two months we shall not be holding meetings in May or June. We hope to hold our **next meeting on Friday, July, 13th** at Enterprise House. Please phone or email me if you are not currently a member but would like to come. It does not matter whether you are a complete beginner, wondering which way up to hold your iPad, or whether you are an experienced user who can offer tips to the rest of us.

LUNCH GROUP

Report by Jean Turner

12 of us met this month at the Teesdale Restaurant, Barnard Castle, comments were, generous helpings of excellent home cooking, friendly service, good chips.

Next meeting: May 10th, Brownlow Arms, Caldwell. 12.00 for 12.30

Please inform me of numbers Monday before—Jean Turner 01833 660172

MUSIC APPRECIATION

MARCH Report by Kathleen Howcroft

A Musical Quiz was planned for our January meeting but the weather had other ideas and the quiz was postponed until March.

Again, Marilyn produced a very good brain teaser for us. We had two winners who shared the prize. Most of us had much lower scores even though we recognised the music etc. but couldn't give it a name or composer. We heard a variety of music. Bach, Vivaldi, Schumann, Purcell, music from musicals and guess the instrument, plus lots of musical facts we had forgotten. One clue to a question was: "not a boot woman" Answer - Schumann. We dedicated a whole morning to Benjamin Britten a few months ago but some of us had forgotten when he died.....1976!

A very pleasant part to our morning was listening to two recordings sung beautifully by Mary Anderson in 2002 & 2003:

Pie Jesu - Requiem by Gabriel Faure and Laudate Dominum - Mozart Vespers.

Thank you again Marilyn for all the work you do to provide us with such good quizzes. An entertaining morning was had by all.

NEXT MEETINGS: Friday 18th May at 10 am in the Millennium Room, Cotherstone Village Hall. DVD Great Composer Series: Chopin

Contact: Kathleen Howcroft 01833 695223 email: kmhinbc@gmail.com

NEEDLECRAFT

April Report by Glen Howard

A surprising number of us met on a snowy, miserable Easter Monday. But indoors the mood was lively and jolly. Several people were working on our charity project for this year - twiddlemuffs for those with dementia. Other projects included patchwork, knitting and crochet.

There was praise for some of our local tradesmen who had been prompt in responding to calls and done a good job at reasonable rates. Several of us had been to Liverpool recently and waxed lyrical about the various museums we had visited - The terracotta army at the World Museum; the Museum of Liverpool; the Beatles Museum; and Port Sunlight Museum and Lady Lever Art Gallery.

Our next meeting is on the next Bank Holiday, Monday 7th May 2018. New members are always welcome - both beginners and experts - so do give me a ring for venue details: 01833 631639

Group	Report page	Next meeting	Contact details
Art Appreciation	6-7	Wed 2 May	Roger Stanyon 01833 631758
Astronomy	N/A	Phone	Robert Hartness 01833 638445
Birdwatching	8-9	Phone	Anne Harbron 01325 730935
Book Group 2	11	Mon 14 May	Elizabeth Long 01833 641494
Book Group 3 ROOM TO READ	11-12	Wed 16 May	Annie Clouston 01833 637091
Discussion	14	Friday 11 May	Glen Howard 01833 631639
French Conversation	14-17	Thurs 24 April	Annie Woodward 01833 627264
Gardening	18	Fri 4 May	Pauline Fawcett 01833 638020
Genealogy	19	Thurs 3 May	Alan Swindale 01388 488348
Geology	20-21	Mon 21 May	Barry Cook 01833 638293
Historic Environment	22	Thurs 10 May	Tim Meacham 07847 182554
iPad	24	Fri 13 July	Rita Wheeler 01833 637386
Italian Conversation		Phone	Marie 07754 205664

Group	Report page	Next meeting	Contact details
Lunch Group	24	Thurs 10 May	Jean Turner 01833 660172
Music Appreciation	25	Friday 18 May	Kathleen Howcroft 01833 695223
Needlecraft	25	Mon 7 May	Glen Howard 01833 631639
Philosophy	28-29	Tues 22 May	Ruth Sansom 01325 401850
Photography	30	Tues 15 May	John Harbron 01325 730935
Plants in Flower	31	Tues 30 April	Ruth Stables 01833 650006
Science and Technology	32-35	Mon 14 May	Roy Tranter 01833 638288
Scrabble	36	Mon 14 May	Lilian Smith 01833 650628
Singing for Pleasure	N/A	Phone	Hazel Yeadon 01833 638710
Spanish Conversation	36	Thurs 3 May	Lusia McAnna 01833 638989
Theatre	N/A	Various	Elizabeth Formstone 01325 374727
Travel	37	Various	Dorothy Jameson 01833 637957
Understanding Classical Music	38-39	Friday 27 April	Bill Heyes 01833 640885 More overleaf...

Group	Report page	Next meeting	Contact details
WALKING GROUPS			
Shorter walks 3-4 miles	40	Mon 23 April	Jan Fowler 01833 638815
Walking Group 4-6 miles	40-41	Tues 8 May	Susan Clarke 01325 730434
Goldilocks 7-9 miles	42	Wed 16 May	John Golding 01833 641254
Fellwalking 8-13 miles	42-43	Wed 23 May	Phil Clarke 01325 718552
Wine Group	44	Tues 22 May	Tim Meacham 07847 182554
Writers Group	N/A	Phone	Penny Foster 01833 695847

PHILOSOPHY GROUP

March Report on Dame Mary Warnock by Elizabeth Long

It has been said that Mary Warnock has had significantly more influence on the way British society thinks of itself than any living male philosopher. She is a champion of a woman's right to philosophise and a veteran of royal commissions and committees of inquiry. Born April 1924, into a wealthy background, she was privately educated before studying classics at Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford, where she obtained a First in Greats. She went on to hold various posts and fellowships at Oxford and Cambridge (she was Mistress of Girton College, Cambridge 1984-1991) and delivered lectures and talks at various institutions. She was an active member of the House of Lords, from which she is now retired.

As well as writing several books and papers on various aspects of philosophy, she also chaired or took part in a number of committees of inquiry. In articles about her, she is referred to as 'the practical philosopher', 'a philosophical plumber' or a 'public fixer'. Although she took part in a number of inquiries, there were two that have had the most impact on British society.

Those of us with a background in education will recall the Warnock Report, published in 1978, and highly influential in changing the way children with special needs were treated, bringing in 'statementing' and integration into mainstream schooling. Interestingly, she went on subsequently to criticise the way the system has developed and thinks there should be a new inquiry.

The second important and far-reaching report that came out of the Committee of Inquiry into Human Fertilisation and Embryology led to the Act in 1990 that governs how, this often controversial area, is regulated. Its effect has been to require licensing for procedures such as IVF and to ban research using human embryos more than 14 days old. It was said that "perhaps the greatest achievement of the Warnock committee is that it managed to get an ethical consensus that people understood as well as shared".

She continues to voice often controversial views. She is a committed advocate of euthanasia, causing controversy in 2008 with an opinion that people with dementia should be allowed to elect to die if they felt they were "a burden to their family or the state".

As a moral philosopher, Mary Warnock does not believe in absolute right or absolute wrong, everything is relative to her. She says that those who make absolute distinctions between right and wrong are, in her view, irrational and indeed dangerous people. In her view, morality is not simply the preserve of religion but that we must learn morality from each other and not just God. She believes that sympathy with human need is the bedrock of good behaviour. She believes that, as a philosopher, she can bring a more objective view to issues and can separate emotion from logic and reason.

Following Elizabeth's input, Wallace and Ray gave an introduction to Bertrand Russell and his background and the importance to him of mathematics, particularly with regard to his idea on appearance and reality. Ray offered this nugget:

"Poetry is the moment in your mind before you spoil it by writing it down in words." (a quote from his Northumbrian poet Basil Bunting). Pure mathematics is just like this.

Next meeting: 22nd May, 10am at Penny's Café. Bill will lead the session on Existentialism, and Jean Paul Sartre.

Photography Group

April report by John Harbron

After the last 2 meetings had been cancelled due to snow, it was no surprise to find that snow was forecast yet again. Despite this, some hardy members ventured across to Cumbria to the Castlerigg Stone Circle near Keswick.

Yes there was a bit of snow, and yes the A66 was blocked due to an accident, but eventually we all managed to meet up at the Circle. The weather was not great, with intermittent drizzle and low clouds, but we consoled ourselves that it would produce some moody atmospheric shots.

Castlerigg (pictured below) is situated in a very dramatic setting, offering panoramic views in all directions with mountains such as Helvellyn and High Seat as a backdrop. It was constructed at some point in the Neolithic and Bronze Age, and every year thousands of visitors come to look, and wonder who built it, and why. It is composed of 38 free standing stones, some up to 3 metres tall, offering a variety of possibilities for the photographer. Given the weather on the day we thought that monochrome might do it the most justice, with a little additional help at the post processing stage to emphasise the atmospheric conditions.

After we had taken all the pictures we wanted, we went into Keswick for a bite of lunch, then ambled along the lakeside and round the town to take a few photos for our theme this year, which is Town Photography. The town was very interesting, and we spent some time in one of the local Photographers shops admiring his work. Finally, just as we were heading for home, the sunshine appeared to illuminate our journey back via the (still closed) A66.



Our next outing is to Sedgefield Races on May 15th.

Plants in Flower Group

Report by Rose Pude

Our **first meeting** of the year on 3rd April was the day after even more snow but 8 intrepid souls met at Bowlees and scoured The Quarry for any signs of plant life. We managed just 8 species including 3 soggy coltsfoot, one rather pathetic celandine and a very shy barren strawberry.

However, the snow melt cascading down over Summerhill Force and into Bowlees Beck was very impressive – truly memorable – so much so that after tea at the Visitor Centre some of us went down to look at Low Force too – also stupendous.

So – better luck with the plants next time---but it's always worth getting out there – plants or not!

Our **second meeting** was on 18th April in warm sunshine. We met at Egglestone Abbey and walked first through a damp meadow by Thorsgill Beck then we went over Abbey Bridge and walked through the woods on the north bank of the Tees. Better weather since our previous meeting meant there were many more flowers out and we managed 25 species including moschatel. This is an insignificant small plant with green flowers also known as Townhall Clock as each flowering stalk has one flower facing upwards and four more facing outwards like a clock face on a tower. It is a symbol of Christian watchfulness. We finished up with tea and coffee at the Morrith Hotel.

Our **next meetings** are as follows:-

Monday 30th April: meet at 2 p.m. in the Car Park by the Working Men's Club at the bottom of The Hude in Middleton for an expedition into Middleton Woods.

Thursday 17th May: meet at 2 p.m. in the main Car Park at Cow Green – hopefully it will be bright and sunny and we will see some gentians.

New members always welcome: contact Ruth Stables on 01833 650006 or kruth@btopenworld.com

U3A Science and Technology Group

Report of March meeting: *Radiometric Dating and the Age of the Earth*

Bob Tuddenham gave this interesting and informative talk about how radioactive isotopes have been used to determine the age of the Earth, as well as date many events in the geological and human records.

As a starting point Bob gave a brief review of the structure of atoms and of radioactivity. The essential points to come from this were that: an element is determined by the number of protons in its nucleus; most elements have several isotopes (same number of protons but different number of neutrons in the nucleus); radioactivity transmutes an isotope of one element into an isotope of another element; it transmutes at a constant rate which is unaffected by any chemical or physical process such as extreme acidity or basicity or exceedingly high temperatures. The rate at which an isotope converts into another is known as the half-life and is the time taken for 50% of the atoms in a sample to convert (decay); and it then takes one half-life for 50% of the remaining atoms to decay and so on. Whilst the half-life for a given isotope decay is constant, there is a wide range of rates for different isotopes ranging from microseconds to millions of years.

Bob focussed on just two processes: the decay of carbon-14 (^{14}C) to nitrogen-14 and the decay of uranium isotopes into lead isotopes. The half-life of ^{14}C is 5,720 years and can be used to measure dates out to 20,000-50,000 years. The technique was first proposed by Willard Libby in the 1940's, shortly after the discovery of ^{14}C , and during the 1950's he developed the techniques and instrumentation that made the measurements practical. His method measured the amount of radioactivity in the sample of soot that he created from the original sample by a laborious chemical process. In the late 1970's the Accelerator Mass Spectrometer was introduced. This measured the number of isotope atoms in a sample directly and greatly simplified the measurements, as well as considerably reducing the size of sample needed.

Libby was aware of the assumptions necessary to convert the measured radiocarbon date into an archaeological date. Two critical ones are that the rate of formation of ^{14}C in the atmosphere has been constant over the last 50,000 years (it is formed by the bombardment of nitrogen atoms by cosmic rays) and that the ratio of ^{14}C to the other carbon isotopes in the atmosphere has been constant. Both are not strictly true but considerable work with complementary methods of age determination have created a calibration curve to convert the raw ^{14}C date into an archaeological date with a small error range.

To round off this section, Bob gave a few examples of ^{14}C dating. ^{14}C cannot be used to measure the age of the Earth; isotopes with half-lives of thousands of millions of years are needed. The uranium isotopes ^{235}U and ^{238}U with half lives of 713Myr and 4,498Myr respectively are suitable. These two isotopes decay through different series of radioactive isotopes to the stable lead isotopes ^{206}Pb and ^{207}Pb . Arthur Holmes, an influential "local" geologist, recognised the importance of using radioactive isotopes to determine the age of the Earth. In 1911 he used chemical methods to measure the amounts of uranium and lead in samples to come up with an estimate of about 1,500Myr for the age of the Earth. As with all these early methods, there was considerable practical difficulty, lack of knowledge of complicating factors and relatively insensitive detectors.

Over the next several decades, Holmes and people such as Nier, Patterson and Houterman refined the techniques and instrumentation. They also developed and tested theories about the geochemistry of uranium in rock which clarified the assumptions needed to calculate the age of the Earth from measurements of uranium and lead isotope ratios. As a result the age of the Earth gradually became older and by the mid 1950's had converged on a value of 4,500Myr. The currently accepted value is 4,600Myr. Since this pioneering work the decay of other radioisotopes has been used in a variety of dating experiments for many purposes other than the age of the Earth. Many of these complement and extend the ^{14}C , ^{235}U and ^{238}U work.

Throughout his talk, Bob gave many glimpses and anecdotes about Arthur Holmes. Holmes was brought up in Gateshead. He moved to the Royal College of Science, London, to study physics and geology. Very soon, in 1910, he moved to Mozambique where he prospected minerals. He returned to London after contracting malaria, got his PhD in 1917 and, in 1920, moved to Burma with his family as chief geologist for an oil company. This company failed in 1924 and he returned to England penniless. Fortunately, he was soon appointed Reader in geology at Durham University. He accepted a Chair of geology at Edinburgh University in 1943 where he retired in 1956. He died in 1965.

At the age of 23 he published the very influential *The age of the Earth* (1913) and his book *Principles of Physical Geology* (1944) became the standard text in geology and is still highly regarded and used in modern courses. Holmes' work on radiometric dating, the age of the Earth and continental drift were ground-breaking and significantly developed the understanding of geology.

U3A Science and Technology Group

April Report: Artificial Intelligence (and some artificial stupidity)

This month's meeting was a talk by Roy Tranter about Artificial Intelligence (AI). AI has been increasingly in the news as it is the foundation of many modern technologies, not least being driverless cars.

As a starting point Roy tried to define intelligence. Unfortunately, there are as many definitions out there as there are people writing about it. So, Roy gave his own definition which included the tangible things of acquiring, remembering and recalling facts, discovering relationships between facts and using these to generalise, predict and infer consequences. But it also included the intangibles of appreciating beauty and emotion and knowing self. Roy also stressed that a learnt skill is not by itself intelligence.

Artificial Intelligence, on the other hand is a non-living system that can emulate intelligence. This is normally associated with computers and robots but AI has much wider application even though computers might be used in the implementation. The success of an AI is often assessed by the Turing Test which is passed if a human communicating with an AI cannot determine if the system is another human or not. Although several systems have claimed to pass the Turing Test, their "intelligence" is very limited (e.g. playing chess) and nothing has come close to matching the wide abilities of the human brain. Passing the test does pose a conundrum, however. If an AI passes the test, is it alive and, if it is alive, is it still artificial?

Learning is clearly part of intelligence and is a function of the brain. The main features of the human brain were reviewed briefly before focussing on the neurons that make up most of the brain's structure. There are several types of neuron, each optimised for a particular function, but they all have the same basic structure. Input signals are created in the dendrites which are connected either to other neurons or to sensors such as the eye or skin. The dendrites channel the input signals to the neuron's nucleus for processing. The nucleus also looks after all the housekeeping chores to keep the neuron healthy. The third basic structure is the axon. Each neuron has only one axon and it carries the processed signal from the nucleus. An axon can have many end branches, each connected to another neuron. Roy stressed that although there is much known about how neurons and the brain work, there is much more that is not known.

A very simple and simplistic neuron model for colour perception was used to show how a simple summation of dendrite input signals, and a

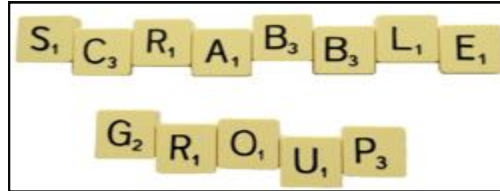
comparison with a threshold value in the nucleus, can be used to switch "axon" signals on and off with the resulting output signals being interpreted by the brain (somehow!) as colours.

This model led to the description of Artificial Neural Networks (ANN) which are mathematical simulations of the brain's neural network. Although ANNs look similar to the brain network, using input signal summation and comparison with a threshold to generate output signals, they do use a different process (simple arithmetic instead of complex time-based chemistry), they have nowhere near the complexity of the brain and their training (learning) process is orders of magnitude slower than the brain's. The most commonly implemented form of ANN was used to illustrate how an ANN is trained, learns and is used. Quite a bit of pre-processing has to be done to convert the objects to be detected by the ANN into digital signals that can be fed to the ANN inputs - an example of using a 4 pixel camera to image a line in different orientations was used. Second, a trained ANN holds the important information about all of the input objects in the strengths of the interconnections between its neurons. This means that one ANN can represent many objects, for example, all the letters in an alphabet or all the features that allow a face to be detected in an image.

However, just as with the brain, an ANN is not perfect. It will recognise only objects that it has been trained on; if something different is presented then it will report its closest match. At the end of last year there was widespread newspaper coverage of an AI that reported an image of a turtle as a rifle! Under the headlines things were more understandable. The turtle image had been subtly modified by shading to deliberately confuse the ANN into reporting a rifle - the unmodified image was correctly reported as a turtle.

Roy then briefly described Expert Systems. These are one of the oldest forms of AI (from the start of the computer age). They rely on having large databases of facts and relationships between facts - the latter can be simple rules (run is a verb) or based on the experience of experts (if you hear this noise the most likely cause is widget Z). These days expert systems go under the name of Big Data and they are used extensively in e.g. medical diagnosis, generating insurance quotations, tracking shopping preferences and playing games such as chess. Expert Systems can also be used with ANNs to give very powerful AI systems. However, the bottom line is that AI is only as good as the designer and its training, as a few examples showed.

The **next meeting** is on 14 May 2018 at The Witham; when members can bring their own short contributions on recent S&T topics.



Report by Judith Fanner

The Scrabble Group met at our house in Cotherstone on one of the few, warm sunny days of the year so far!

This did not deter a group of seven turning up, including three new members. We had a very enjoyable afternoon and it made a change looking out onto beautiful sunshine, while we played two games in two groups. The highest score for one word placed, was achieved by Linda who used all her letters to form the word PREACHED and scored 70 which went on to win her the game.

If you would like to join us please contact Lillian Smith on 01833 650628 or by email at david.lillian@btinternet.com

Next Meeting: Monday 14th May at Mary's home in Barnard Castle - 61 Victoria Rd 2.00 - 4.00 p.m.

SPANISH CONVERSATION

April Report by Lusia McAnna

We were very warmly welcomed and hosted (Bienvenidos) by Robert at his home for our April meeting. 2 new members joined us, which made us an intimate gathering of 7, with apologies received from another 3 members; so our group is growing nicely.

The topic of Sport gave us scope for an interesting discussion, often in Spanish. A few of us felt that we had been completely put off Sports by the compulsory sports at school, while others had been deterred by injuries sustained while being forced into playing team games. We had several skiing and sailing (navegacion a vela) enthusiasts in the group and we debated whether Yoga was in fact a sport or a form of spiritual exercise. As always we wandered off topic and meandered into the realms of Motor homing (Autocaravanas) and other such useful subjects.

Next meeting: 3 May in Hamsterley at Stella's house - for car share from Barnard Castle or driving directions, please contact me at:

spanish@teesdaleu3a.org.uk. The topic for the meeting will be "Asking directions" and stories arising from this sport.

TRAVEL

LIVERPOOL MARCH 2018—REPORT BY DOROTHY JAMESON

Nineteen of us had an enjoyable visit to Liverpool, despite the weather. The hotel was central, the staff were most helpful and the food was good. Luckily we had two wonderful guides, three counting Carol from Kyle travel! The coach trip round the city pointing out the places of interest was very helpful and the trip to Port Sunlight was amazing.

Those who had already seen the Terracotta Army exhibition before were disappointed as there seemed rather a lot of models and replicas and not a great deal of the actual army. The trip on the Mersey was enjoyable. The views would have been better from the outside deck but it was warmer inside.

Adjustments had to be made to the route home in view of the fact that the A66 was closed due to snow. We did manage to see the Antony Gormley exhibition but did not go to Southport. Nineteen set off and nineteen came back and we all agreed that we had had a lovely time.

NEXT TRIP: Carol at Kyle Travel has now started to plan our next trip which will be to **Edinburgh in mid October**. Visits are planned to Holyrood Palace, the Royal Yacht Britannia, the Botanical Gardens and the Falkirk wheel. There will be plenty of free time for visits to museums, art galleries and shops. Carol has reserved 8 twin/double rooms and 8 single rooms and it would be helpful if anyone who is interested could let Carol know. Further details will be available at the May meeting.

Richmond U3A is running a trip to Port Sunlight available to Teesdale members, on Wednesday 13th June at a cost of £37.50 per person. Price includes coach travel, museum entrance, guided coach tour and meal on route home. Departing from Nuns Close Richmond at 8am.

The visit starts with a tour of the village on our coach with commentary from an experienced tour guide who will bring to life the story of the village, factory workers and residents followed by a visit to the museum set in the former Girls' Club. There is also the 'Workers Cottage' and Lady Lever Art Gallery to explore. At 3.30pm we will board the coach to return home, stopping at The Royal Oak for a 2-course meal, arriving back in Richmond around 8.30pm (traffic depending). If you are interested please **contact Margaret Lowery**, 01748818088 or 07591602260; email margaretlowery@rocketmail.com

Understanding Classical Music Group

Report by Bill Heyes

The group began the meeting by viewing a video of Britten's *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*. This piece (based on a theme by Purcell) was commissioned after the WWII to become an educational film for schoolchildren because of the shortage of music teachers after the war. We viewed the original film with Sir Malcolm Sargent conducting and narrating.

Staying with our theme of 20th century classical music, the group then studied the classical origins of film music. When silent films were introduced music was used to enhance the atmosphere of the film and to create a certain mood. The use of music to accompany a play wasn't new – Mendelsohn in 1841 wrote incidental music for a performance of Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream* and in 1872 Grieg composed incidental music for Ibsen's play *Peer Gynt*. However with the silent movies there was also a purely practical reason for requiring music – to drown out the noise of the projector. Initially, a solo pianist or organist provided the music, mainly drawn from the classical repertoire by the musician but requiring much improvisation. Within a short time the studios began to issue cue sheets for the pianist/organist, again using mainly classical music. Eventually, in the bigger theatres, the solo musician was replaced by an orchestra. It was as a solo pianist accompanying silent films that Shostakovich honed his skills as a composer before he became famous.

With advent of the "talkies" film studios preferred to use original music rather than material chosen from the classical repertoire. This was supposedly so that preconceptions associated with the classical score wouldn't be brought to bear on the film. Among the composers engaged by the studios to compose original music for films was Erich Wolfgang Korngold, arguably the most influential of them all. Korngold was a classical composer from Austria. He was hailed as a child musical genius by Gustav Mahler and Richard Strauss both of whom guided his musical development. Korngold had written his first composition by age 7 years and by 11 years old had written a ballet which thrilled audiences of the time. Further works followed and by age 14 years he had produced his first opera. Although his classical work is largely forgotten today by the early 1930s he had established a renowned international reputation. He was invited to Hollywood to score a film for Warner Brothers after which he returned to Austria to complete an opera he had begun before leaving for America. In 1938 he had again gone to Hollywood - to prepare the score for *The Adventures of Robin Hood*. Korngold remained in Hollywood because the German Nazis had invaded Austria.

The group watched a video reviewing Korngold's film music and then listened to an extract of his overture for *Captain Blood*. In this music can be heard predictions of future film scores by John Williams such as: *Star Wars, ET, Indiana Jones*. By 1947 the studios were looking for more 'modern' compositions and Korngold fell out of favour. He spent the following 10 years returning to his classical roots.

It is in this later period that his violin concerto was composed; and the group listened to a podcast of Nicola Benedetti discussing the concerto. The music critics of the time disparagingly dismissed the work as of little significance calling it a "Hollywood concerto". As Ms Benedetti pointed out, the critics totally misconstrued the work; the Hollywood sound referred to by the critics was in fact Korngold – he invented the Hollywood sound! The work has now become a standard in the classical repertoire of today.

Our next meeting will be on Friday 27th April 10.00am at Startforth School when we will study the role of rhythm, an essential element of music, and review the influence of minimalism on 20th century classical music.

Contact: Bill Heyes - Email: wfheyas@btinternet.com, Tel 01833 640885

QUEEN VICTORIA IN PARIS
A review by Hazel Yeadon

I was enthralled by this temporary exhibition at the Bowes Museum, which shows watercolours given to Queen Victoria after her visit to Paris in August 1855. The detail is phenomenal and shows what a splendid trip this must have been. The pictures have been loaned by the Queen from the Royal Collection, and aren't usually on display to preserve the beautiful colours, so I felt very privileged to have seen them. If you haven't already been, the exhibition runs until the 24 June.

On 15 May at 2.30, Rosie Razzall, Curator of Prints and Drawings at Royal Collection Trust, will give a talk about Queen Victoria's historic state visit in Paris in 1855; a remarkable moment in Anglo-French relations. The events of this ten-day tour – spectacular balls, firework displays and cheering crowds as well as the quieter moments – are brought to life through discussion of the watercolours on display in the exhibition.

WALKING GROUPS

SHORTER WALKS GROUP

March report by Jan Fowler

A group of 11 walkers took advantage of a spring like afternoon to enjoy an outing up to Lartington and back to Barney. Setting off necessarily across County Bridge and after negotiating the short diversion at Deepdale, the party set off along the track to Tees Cottage near the old viaduct. The weather was sunny, warm and very pleasant. A climb through the woods brought us to the old railway line just next to the site of Tees Valley junction where the branch to Middleton used to veer off to the right. A straight-forward trek then followed along the track-bed of the former Stainmore route up towards Pecknell Farm. Here a party of 4 opted to circle back to Barney rather than tackle the whole walk to Lartington, but this gave them the bonus of sighting a deer which they watched for 5 minutes as it grazed at the edge of the field.

The remaining 7 continued along the railway until they came in sight of Lartington Hall where they changed direction and left the railway to take the field path to Pecknell. Here, instead of continuing across the field to rejoin the track they came up, they chose to go into the woods where they followed a very attractive woodland path which eventually brought them back to the Tees. It was then back the way they came to the bridge and up the hill to the Post Office. All in all, a walk of 2 hours or so. All agreed that it had been a very enjoyable afternoon with very pleasant company.

(Walk Leaders: Andy & Maria Waddington)

Our next walk will be to East Mellwaters/God's Bridge, on Monday afternoon, 23rd April, 2-4pm. Jean Bartle will be leading this walk.

WALKING GROUP

March report by Gillian Barnes-Morris: Cotherstone Walk - 5.5 Miles

Sixteen people arrived at East Green, Cotherstone for the March walk, all grateful for good weather and desperate to stretch their legs after being cooped up for too long.

We began with a short walk through the village before turning into a field that took us past the old Station House, up and along a short stretch of the railway line and then back down to cross over two more fields.

From the Moor Road we took a track along the side of David's house where we stopped to admire swathes of snowdrops. The end of the track opens onto a couple more fields leading us back to the railway line. Turning towards Romalldkirk, we passed a couple of beautiful Dales Ponies and noticed the first lambs we had seen this year. After a short break we walked towards the next stile where, surprisingly, a heavy drift of snow still lay, seemingly acting as a dividing line between the two villages.

The next fields led us along the side of Doe Park to a downward track that's normally difficult to negotiate however to our delight, workmen were in the process of laying a new path, and we were happy to be the first to tramp on it. Before climbing the steps that would take us back into the village we made a short detour to look at the remains of a mill and a nearby waterfall, noticing how high the water had risen. Continuing on we took a path behind the high street to a track that, I'm reliably told was used by Hannah Hauxwell to hang her washing? Interestingly the path then led to a wooded area where, according to local historians, David and Phil, a hermit once dwelt in a cave just visible above the path, living in harmony with the fairies who continue to live in the area. From this magical spot it wasn't long before we arrived at Kennedy's Pond where we once again enjoyed a wonderful display of snowdrops.

Our last stop before arriving back at the East Green was to investigate the grounds of the Quaker Meeting House where we learnt that Darlington and Cotherstone were the original site of "Quakerism" in County Durham.

Although the walk was rather muddy in spots there were some interesting detours along the way and more importantly skies were blue and the sun shone.

April report by Susan Clarke: *Alas, Rain Stopped Play!*

Nine hardy souls met in Leyburn but a combination of poor ground conditions, steady rain, low cloud and a chilly temperature did not augur well for a pleasant walk. It was decided to implement Plan B and adjourn to Tenants Auction House for respite. Fortunately there was an art exhibition of Fred Lawson's paintings including several based on Wensleydale for us to view. We hope to complete the planned walk later in the year and experience this wonderful scenery for real. Many thanks to Nicky and Sandra for valiantly managing to recce the walk despite inclement weather.

Next walk: Tuesday, 8th May. Meet at 10 a.m. round Ravensworth Green, Holmedale Valley, Richmondshire DL11 7ET. Leader Kathleen 01833 695223.

GOLDILOCKS WALKING GROUP

March report by John Golding

Ten of us met at the old railway station at Mickleton. Once again the weather was good to us. We set off along the railway line towards Romaldekirk, there was still a bit of snow on the ground. Once we reached Romaldekirk, we headed up to Botany and Romaldekirk moor. We did not see much wildlife, just hearing the occasional curlew and lapwing.

After a fairly long climb we reached Botany, where we had a lunch break. The wind was cold so we did not linger for long.

After the break we headed down the track with views of Grassholme Reservoir and Kirkcarrion in the distance. On reaching the Grassholme road we headed over the fields eventually reaching the old railway line, which we followed back to Mickleton station.

There will be **no walk in April** as I am on holiday. The **next walk** will be on May 16th, venue to be announced.

FELL WALKING GROUP

March report by Chris Walker: Wolsingham and Weardale

This walk had been postponed for one month due to the intervention of The Beast from The East. The weather at Wolsingham Station this morning looked a lot more clement, no snow and a hint of sun. The group set off along the platform at a brisk pace and as it was still before the Easter Bank Holiday there would be no trains today (or so we thought).

From the station, we walked up Wear Bank then right onto the Weardale Way to Towdy Potts. There we were met by a friendly farm dog which seemed delighted to be petted by one of the walkers. The highest point of the walk was on Sunnyside Edge at around 1100 feet. Near to the highest point was a group of walled in Beach Trees, a welcome break to the stark grouse moor. From this vantage point we could see to the North, Tunstall Reservoir to the windmills around Tow law, and to the South was Black Hambleton.

With the sounds of curlew and buzzard to accompany us, we now started a descent toward Bollihope Burn. On our way there we had to cross Fine Burn, a little tricky as there was no bridge and it had rained the night before. We passed thick loose black bands of stones though what must have been coal measures, then on to Pye Close, a very remote but still occupied

smallholding. After a further steep descent we stood on a footbridge overlooking Bollihope Burn. The burn ran through a largely man-made valley where limestone had been quarried in previous centuries. The route followed downstream and we were now on top of what had been a narrow gauge railway that had carried limestone to the kilns at White Kirkley. We stopped for lunch at Harehope Quarry viewing circle, a perfect spot for the group to contemplate all the work that had gone on to extract the famous Frosterley Marble. Despite its name, Frosterley Marble is not a true marble, but a limestone full of fossils which can be cut and polished to create an ornamental stone. The 'Sugar Limestone' found on Cronkley Fell was re-crystallised by heat from the Whin Sill and is a true marble.



<https://harehopequarry.org.uk>

After lunch we took a rather muddy path back to the Weardale Railway line making sure to glance left and right as we crossed the line. The path back to Wolsingham was very easy, flat and well maintained. The party arrived back at the station car park just in time to see a British Rail Class 122 diesel locomotive go by tooting as it passed, just as well we took care when crossing the line. After what was agreed to have been a most enjoyable walk we went for refreshments. Unfortunately both Cafés we tried in Wolsingham had just closed at 2:30 !! The Black Bull came to our rescue with tea or beer served with a friendly smile.

Next walk: Wednesday 23 May, details to be circulated by email

Wine Group

April report by Tim Meacham

We met on April 17th (thanks to Roger for his customary excellent hospitality) to spend time sampling wines of California. Rather than head up the luscious (and generally expensive) Napa and Sonoma Valleys, we tried five of the less well-known generic 'Wines of California', all available from the major local supermarkets (in the case of Tesco at time of writing with a 25% discount). The quiz (not a formal examination of course) once again revealed that a number of members need to indulge in some serious revision before the May meeting!

Our only white this time was from the 'Dark Horse' Winery, a 2016 Pinot Grigio (£6.13 from Tesco); despite the maker Beth Liston's claim of a 'bold wine with big personality', this was found quite disappointing ('insipid', 'expensive even with a 25% discount' etc.). Nor did the Rosé offering, the 2016 Turner Road Reserve (£5.75 from Morrisons) find much favour. Most members thought it unremarkable at best, barely drinkable in one case.

Happily (for the Convenor's reputation) the three reds to some extent made up for any deficiencies in the first two wines. While the Lidl Merlot, a snip at £4.49 was 'quite drinkable' with its promised 'touch of vanilla', the two best bottles of the day (both £5.25 with discount from Tesco) were reds. Just ahead was the Geyser Peak Malbec ('finely balanced with spice to produce a full bodied yet very approachable wine ready for drinking now'), but the 'Dark Horse' Cabernet Sauvignon was regarded much more positively than its white counterpart, members seeing it as being 'driven by flavours of blackberry and black cherry, supported by firm tannins and a hint of spice'.

The **May meeting** will be held on Tuesday 22nd May; the topic will be 'Unusual wines'. For further details, any potential new members should contact Tim Meacham (see front page of the Forum).

Did you know that May 14-20 is National Vegetarian Week?

Here is an easy vegetarian recipe, adapted from *BBC Good Food* online:

Crispy Greek Style Pie

Ingredients

- 200g bag spinach leaves
- 175g jar sundried tomatoes in oil
- 100g feta cheese, crumbled
- 2 eggs
- ½ 250g pack filo pastry

Method

1. Put the spinach into a large pan. Pour over a couple of table-spoons of water, then cook until just wilted. Tip into a sieve, leave to cool a little, then squeeze out any excess water and roughly chop.
2. Drain the oil from the tomatoes (this can be used as a well-flavoured oil for other tomato-based sauces). Roughly chop and put into a bowl along with the spinach, feta and eggs. Mix well.
3. Carefully unroll the filo pastry. Cover with some damp sheets of kitchen paper to stop it drying out. Take a sheet of pastry and brush liberally with some of the sundried tomato oil. Drape oil-side down in a 22cm loose-bottomed cake tin so that some of the pastry hangs over the side. Brush oil on another piece of pastry and place in the tin, just a little further round. Keep placing the pastry pieces in the tin until you have roughly three layers, then spoon over the filling. Pull the sides into the middle, scrunch up and make sure the filling is covered. Brush with a little more oil.
4. Heat oven to 180C/fan 160C/gas 4. Cook the pie for 30 mins until the pastry is crisp and golden brown. Remove from the cake tin, slice into wedges and serve with salad.

ENJOY!

April May Quiz

"A Garden is a lovesome thing, God wot!" Thomas Edward Brown

1. What general term is given to those trees whose leaves fall in autumn?
2. Charles Darwin described this carnivorous plant as "the most wonderful plant in the world"?
3. What is the name given to the female reproductive organ of a flower?
4. Which flower's name comes from the Ancient Greek word for star?
5. Name the cynical snail in *The Magic Roundabout*?
6. Most species of eucalyptus are native to which country?
7. What would a gardener do with a dibber or dibble?
8. Which grain is used to make semolina?
9. Which tissue beneath the bark of trees forms wood?
10. Where did pelargoniums originate?
11. What is 'xeriscaping'?
12. What is the plant *Fallopia japonica* more commonly known as?
13. When is the best time to plant most spring flowering bulbs?
14. *Hyacinthoides non-scripta* is more commonly known as?
15. What is a perennial plant?
16. What is the common name of *Kniphofia*?
17. Bill and Ben were flower pot men, but who was their herbaceous friend?
18. What is 'tufa'?
19. What is Anthophobia?
20. Which author wrote "The Secret Garden"?

March April Answers

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| 1. The Moon | 2. A sword |
| 3. String | 4. Lancelot |
| 5. Yellow | 6. Dictionary |
| 7. Geoff Hamilton | 8. Edible seaweed |
| 9. Tulips | 10. Kit |
| 11. Wasabi | 12. Ants |
| 13. Cricket | 14. Last steam engine built for a British railway |
| 15. Plutonium | 16. Hawk |
| 17. Niagara Falls | 18. A scale insect |

It's *Your* Forum

Contact: Annie Clouston Editor

e-mail: forumeditor@teesdaleu3a.org.uk phone: 01833 637091

I positively welcome any items of interest by and to the membership. Examples might be: upcoming events in which you are involved; recipes; craft ideas; reviews of shows, concerts, films, theatre; creative writing (less than 400 words, please); in praise of...

DEADLINE FOR CONTRIBUTIONS: Friday 18 May 2018

Handwritten/typed contributions can be left in the **Messages** section of the U3A file in the library. Include your name - if you don't want your name to appear in the Forum, just say so.

Please let the Editor know if you have left a contribution in the library by phoning the above number.

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- Ask a friend to collect one for you at the meeting
- Collect one from the U3A file in Barnard Castle Library
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- The colour version is available on our website:
www.teesdaleu3a.org.uk

Hazel and David Yeadon's Norwegian Arctic Adventure

<https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118512347.ch14>

Every night at 2230 hrs, a 'Hurtigruten' ('The Fast Route') ship leaves Bergen, heading north for six days, right the way up to Kirkenes close to the Russian border. In those six days, it will have visited 34 ports, day and night, carrying post, goods, cars and local people, but more importantly the ship will be carrying about 500 paying passengers. In Kirkenes the ship turns around and heads south, visiting the same 34 ports, and if the first visit was at night, then this time it will be in daylight.

Hazel and I have just returned from one of these trips, and whilst traditionally it is a working ship, the passengers travel in considerable comfort, and are extremely well fed with local produce. It is different from a conventional cruise ship, in that there is no dressing up for meals, and no entertainment, but with the Norwegian coast and its myriad of islands always close by, surely that is enough entertainment?

The ships go to well known cities and towns that the regular cruise ships visit, such as Kristiansund, Alesund, Trondheim and Tromso, but also visit many towns smaller than Barney, tucked up a remote fjord. The stops in port vary between 3 hours and as little as 15 minutes for the smaller places.

For winter trips lots of warm clothing is a must, as for most of the journey it was below freezing, and our record low was in Kirkenes where it was minus 19 c., and that does not take wind chill into account! Even the sea was frozen! Don't worry, the ship is lovely and warm inside.

The scenery was awesome and stunningly beautiful, including seeing the Northern Lights, and fellow passengers, from all over the world, were enthusiastic about all aspects of the journey. Definitely one to do again!



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Future events include (please see www.thewitham.org.uk for full details)

- Thurs 26 April-
Sat 26 May **Teesdale Art NetShowcase Exhibition.** Presenting work by selected artists living or working in the dale.
- Thurs 26 April
7.30pm **Victoria and Abdul (PG)** Drama about the true story of Queen Victoria's relationship with a young Indian clerk
- Sat 28 April
8pm **Melrose Quartet:** Nancy Kerr, James Fagan, Jess and Richard Arrowsmith come together to make music that truly connects to people
- Thurs 3 May
7.15pm **Manon.** Live screening from The Royal Ballet, marking the anniversary of Kenneth MacMillan's death
- Tues 8 May
7pm **Don Pasquale.** Performance recorded in HD of opera from Teatro Alla Scala
- Sat 19 May
8pm **FUNNY WAY TO BE** presents **Richard Herring.** The second instalment in Herring's once-a-decade examination of ageing
- Thurs 25 May
8pm **Frankie Vah.** Luke Wright presents, with frenetic guitars and visceral verse, a play that explores love, loss and belief
- Wed 30 May
7.30pm **Fall Out.** Old Kent Road present a tap dancing production exploring falling out of love through jazz and movement
- Sat 9 June
8pm **Heidi Talbot and John McCusker.** Two of folk music's most highly regarded and celebrated musicians join forces for the first time

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