

# **TEESDALE u3a FORUM**

**OUR MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF INTEREST  
GROUPS IN THE DALE**

**HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

**JANUARY 2022 (22/1)**

**[www.teesdaleu3a.org.uk](http://www.teesdaleu3a.org.uk)**

**Annie Clouston, Chairwoman 01833 637091  
chair@teesdaleu3a.org.uk**

**Phil Johnson, Business Secretary 07792 959320  
bissec@teesdaleu3a.org.uk**

**Tim Meacham, Membership  
07847 182554 memsec@teesdaleu3a.org.uk**

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Founding Chairman: George Jameson**



Chairwoman's Letter, January 2022

Dear friends

It's that time again when I have to remember to get the year right; reinforcement is the thing, so welcome all to 2022, a year that has got to be better than the last.

I have been much exercised lately by anxiety that I am losing my ability to concentrate. Recent articles by Johann Hari and Philippa Perry have reminded me about something I tried to encourage in my students years ago – a sense of flow. This concept, elevated to a capital F, Flow, was developed by Professor Mihalyi Csikszentmihalyi (chick-sent-mi-hal-yi, if that helps). Basically, he believes that we operate as humans best when we achieve, at least some of the time, a sense of Flow. We do this by cutting distractions and working on something that we like doing that stretches us just beyond our current capabilities. When we achieve Flow, the outside world is blocked, time goes by, and we feel good about ourselves. Then we feel more confident and able to keep moving forward. So here comes my New Year Resolution – to work on Flow. This means restarting my cranky piano playing, getting out my sewing machine, and crucially stopping distracting myself (and annoying others by not paying full attention to them) by 'just checking' my emails/texts/Whats App and the rest.

And here's where the u3a comes in... there will be many opportunities to Flow in our workshop activities this year. Next up is two hours of Embroidery, then nostalgia time with the Beatles, and, importantly, discussing ways to wrest those wretched all-consuming, You Tube blaring, screens from our under tens. Our regular groups also offer a haven from external pressure and give us ways of appreciating each other that are very precious.

Let's embrace the Optimism virus, let's embrace Pollyanna, let's Flow...

With very best wishes

Annie

### **It's Your Forum**

Editors: Annie Clouston & Celia Chapple. This month's editor is Annie.

e-mail: [forumeditor@teesdaleu3a.org.uk](mailto:forumeditor@teesdaleu3a.org.uk)

phone: Annie 01833 637091 Celia 07783 419067

Both editors receive all contributions and share the email account:

[forumeditor@teesdaleu3a.org.uk](mailto:forumeditor@teesdaleu3a.org.uk)

**DEADLINE FOR CONTRIBUTIONS for the next edition: Tuesday 8 February 2022**

If we do not acknowledge a contribution by email this is probably because we haven't seen it. Please ring us if we have not acknowledged receipt within 48 hours.

Handwritten/typed contributions can be left in the Messages section of the u3a file in The Witham café. Please phone to let us know if you have left a contribution in this file.

If you want to receive a copy of the Forum but cannot make it to the monthly meeting, you can acquire one by:

- Viewing it online on Teesdale u3a website at: <https://teesdaleu3a.org.uk/>
- Sending us some SAEs and we shall post them to you each month
- Asking a friend to collect one for you at the meeting. The cost is £2 on a 'first come first served' basis.
- Collecting a back copy from the u3a file in The Witham café & shop, the library or TCR Hub.

The Forum is a place for you to share and keep in touch with other members, so please send in your group reports, stories, recipes, your subject articles and research, or something entertaining to make us laugh. Please limit submissions to about 1 page or 400 words and 1 photo, and send them to the Forum Editor at: [forumeditor@teesdaleu3a.org.uk](mailto:forumeditor@teesdaleu3a.org.uk)

**NB There will be no printed copy of the Forum this month as the monthly meeting is being postponed.**

**Next Monthly meeting: Thursday 24 February.** Doors are open at 10am for a prompt 10.30 start.

**The speaker is Jane Ruffer. *The Auckland Project.*** Jane trained as a doctor and practiced as a pathologist for 15 years. She had a career break with a young family and during that time developed an interest in hospice work, deciding to return to work and retrain as a palliative care physician. She has since worked in hospice and acute hospital settings, including time at the Richardson Hospital in Barnard Castle.

She and her husband, Jonathan Ruffer, began supporting work in deprived urban communities from the 1980s – 2010s. In 2011, they decided to focus their efforts in Bishop Auckland, prompted by the plan to sell a fine set of Spanish Baroque paintings away from Bishop Auckland. Having expected to buy only the pictures, the deal ended up with pictures, castle and grounds. The question then arose, "what do we do now?"

Mrs Ruffer's talk will be in two parts:

- o What we are doing?
- o Why are we doing it?

Our speaker in **November** was **Gemma Lewis. Report by Ian Reid**

The Durham University Museum of Archaeology was initially housed in the Old Fulling Mill on the River Wear below the Cathedral. It was opened in 1833, only a year after the University itself was established. After several accommodation changes, in 2014 the Museum was moved to Palace Green, where it is still situated and where it now houses its own collection, built up over the years.

Gemma Lewis, the Curator of Durham Castle and the Museum of Archaeology, described the history of the museum and some of its important collections. William Proctor, the first Curator, and George Townsend Fox, were prominent in helping to establish the museum.

The collection includes many prehistoric, Roman and Anglo Saxon items from the area as well as some transferred from other parts of the country. There are fascinating photographs from a 1906 excavation of a cist in Witton Gilbert, showing a Beaker

burial with skeleton remains. There is a rare, almost complete, Roman lead naval diploma from Lanchester in the name of Tigono, describing his career.

Excavations in Sadler Street produced everyday items from the 10<sup>th</sup> century including ice skates, lots of leather goods and a beautiful beer mug showing hunting dogs. Apparently, in Anglo Saxon times, we were exporting hunting dogs to Europe.

There is a small scale reproduction of the Roman bridge at Piercebridge where there is evidence of three Roman bridges. In addition, divers have discovered thousands of items in the river bed, including figurines and some luxury or high status items. There are also many coins, some of which are fakes or have been tampered with.

The museum has now become a centre for the storage of horse equipment and houses the biggest collection in Britain. Gemma's favourite item is a beautifully decorated, miniature soldier's leg from the knee down, complete with trendy socks and sandals, which could be the handle of an everyday item.

This was an excellent talk, clear and comprehensive, and delivered with a touch of humour.

The vote of thanks was given by Tim Meacham.

## **WEEKEND WORKSHOPS**

### **November's workshop: Grassholme Observatory visit Report by Sue Overton**

Twenty well wrapped members met at the Observatory on a cold evening on 20<sup>th</sup> November for an excellent talk by Gary Fildes, Lead Astronomer, Grassholme Observatory and Founder of Kielder Observatory.

Gary's Introduction to astronomy included amazing photos from the Hubble telescope; the final one of the Andromeda galaxy was particularly spectacular as it zoomed in and out. We also had the opportunity to use the telescopes on site to view the – thankfully - cloud clear skies - Jupiter and its moons were amazing as was our own.

The evening was divided into presentation in the classroom and observation outside with excellent hot chocolate in between!

As this event was oversubscribed, I am now taking names for another visit in late March/early April when we will have the opportunity to view the spring constellations. We are so lucky to have this facility on our doorstep!

If you would like to be included, please email me at [sueoverton@hotmail.com](mailto:sueoverton@hotmail.com)

### **December's workshop: Christmas Wreath-Making**

Thirteen of us gathered at the Guide HQ on Birch Road – a very suitable venue – and with the expert and patient artistic and horticultural support of Denise Marmot, turned a heap of sweet-smelling greenery into things of beauty to grace either our doors or our Christmas tables. It was relaxing and very satisfying to immerse ourselves in a creative task in convivial company. Evidence of our labours can be spotted around the Dale, and in the photo below.

### **Future workshops:**

Saturday 22 January 10am – 1pm **Photography for Beginners**, Witham Room. The workshop will go through the basics of taking a photo, taking into consideration the different functions of your camera. Hopefully this will give you confidence in taking

more photos. If desired, we can have further meetings to work on more advanced functions on your camera. Contact Jane Matheson: [janem1947@hotmail.com](mailto:janem1947@hotmail.com)

Saturday 22 January 2pm **Embroidery** with Elaine Hicks and Janet Sweeting. Now fully booked. Contact Annie Clouston: [annie@cloustons.uk](mailto:annie@cloustons.uk)

Saturday 12 February 2pm at Guide HQ, Birch Road **Beatlemania** with Tim Meacham and Annette Lawson. A chance to indulge in nostalgia, story-telling (Where were you when you heard John Lennon had been shot? I was broken-hearted and sobbing in the kitchen in Hull) and the music of the Beatles, with lots of song. For a place, contact Hazel Yeadon: [hazelyeadon@hotmail.com](mailto:hazelyeadon@hotmail.com)

Saturday 26 March 2pm at Guide HQ, Birch Road **Entertaining Under Tens Happily**, an opportunity to learn and share ways of keeping children under ten amused when you've been blessed with the responsibility of their care. More details next month. Contact Annie: [annie@cloustons.uk](mailto:annie@cloustons.uk)



## **GROUP REPORTS**

### **BIRDWATCHING GROUP**

#### **Report by John Howard**

On Monday 15<sup>th</sup> November, a group of 13 of us visited the Bowlees Visitor Centre and surrounding woods, followed by a walk down to Low Force falls on the River Tees.

Although the weather was overcast, it remained dry, plus the staff at the Centre had filled up the bird feeders. In doing so, they very much help us with our bird count for the day.

Birds seen (22)

Starling, Dunnock, Great-spotted Woodpecker, House Sparrow, Blackbird, Chaffinch, Robin, Wren, Jackdaw, Carrion Crow, Wood pigeon, Blue Tit, Great Tit, Coal Tit, Gold Finch, Dipper, Nuthatch, Collard Dove, Mallard, Pheasant, Redpoll & Siskin.  
Should you wish to join us, please ring John Howard 01833 631639

## **ROOM TO READ BOOK GROUP**

### **November report by Kate Bailey**

*Cocktail Hour under the Tree of Forgetfulness* by Alexandra Fuller

This is a book about one extremely unusual [possibly bipolar] woman; it is also a book about the end of British rule in Africa. The author is the daughter of Nicola Fuller, the main character. Alexandra has previously written a book about her own African childhood (regularly referred to by her mother as "that Awful Book"). It seems she has not been forgiven and this sequel may be her attempt to make amends.

Some of the significant facts of Nicola's life are not revealed until the final few chapters, for example, the tree of the title. Book group readers found it hard to follow the disjointed thread of the family story, which moves from Scotland to Kenya to Zambia and Rhodesia, through civil wars and UDI to the subsequent independence of Kenya and Zimbabwe. After a strange colonial childhood, with a chimp as her best (only?) friend, Nicola is sent away to a boarding school run by vindictive nuns. Always 'difficult and defiant,' she marries young and, as a 'good, wholesome, outdoorsy' type, she builds her own version of an intrepid colonial lifestyle.

There are clues to what drives her - she hopes for a life "Worthy of Fabulous Literature" including tragedies, war and poverty, and achieves those by the bucketful. She has great courage, takes great risks, rides uncontrollable horses, usually carries a loaded gun, drives to town in convoys following minesweepers, and yet she remains obsessed with the idea of "Old [White-Ruled] Africa". Family life doesn't really touch her and the deadly politics of a declining British Empire pass her by. Eventually, she and her husband settle near the Zambesi River, contentedly making a living producing bananas and talapia fish.

The author includes many of her mother's own reminiscences, which may have been exaggerated for dramatic effect. However, towards the end of the memoir Alexandra does seem to see her mother more clearly: her mental health issues, her drinking, her chaotic lifestyle and the manic intensity of her feelings. Some of her behaviours are

appalling, but then she must have been maddened by grief, particularly after the death of a beloved horse, but also (less so) for three babies who died in tragic circumstances. The two remaining daughters moved away as soon as they could and raised their own families in the UK and US.

The group agreed that it is a compelling story of an unbelievably 'awful' mother, who leads an extraordinary life in Africa, written by the daughter who seems to be more forgiving than her older sibling of Nicola's lack of affection and empathy for others. But is it a memoir or a novel? There is little detail of the daughters' lives, nor that of their father, which makes it difficult for the reader to understand what they really thought about Nicola as a mother and a wife. Maybe the "Awful Book" reveals more.

As a book group book, we awarded it 3.5 out of 5 because it had generated an animated discussion; as a book to recommend to friends we agreed it was barely a 2.

### **December report by Sue Neill**

On Wednesday 15 December, the book group discussed Joanna Cannon's first book, ***The Trouble with Sheep and Goats***. It had a generally favourable response from the group, and there was general agreement as to who were the 'sheep' and who the 'goats' in the tale. The story is told from the point of view of a ten-year-old girl as she and her friend set out on a mission to save the souls of those living around them, in a close and ultimately claustrophobic suburban cul-de-sac during the stiflingly hot summer of 1976. Secrets are gradually revealed during the girls' investigation although the adults around the girls do everything in their power to keep them in ignorance.

The strengths of the book are the entirely believable child characters and the often unexpected and sometimes very funny observations made by them. Some members of the group felt that the allegorical nature of the book made it hard to follow through to the end but overall the scores given were:

Would you recommend this book to a friend? 4.5

Would you recommend it to another book group? 4.5

## **DISCUSSION GROUP**

### **Reports by Glen Howard**

#### **November**

It was lovely to welcome some new faces this month. Items in the news that had caught people's attention were: the skeletons displayed in the grounds of the Bowes Museum for Halloween; the fishing dispute with France; bonfires, fireworks and Guy Fawkes; and phone boxes.

Our main topic was ***Women's Safety*** and we discussed various aspects of this subject including women in the Forces; learning martial arts as a protection; the need to change men's behaviour; teaching personal safety in schools and to give respect. It was regretted that so many ideas and unacceptable habits can be picked up easily from the internet.

#### **December**

To say we were a select group this month would be absolutely accurate - there were two of us! However, we enjoyed a very good discussion. Our items of news were the controversy surrounding a speech given by Rod Little at Durham University when a number of students were offended and walked out, later demanding the sacking of the

Professor that had invited him to speak; and also the big business that is Care Home provision.

Our main topic was ***Working from Home*** and this covered many areas relating to this topic.

Our next meeting was 10.15am on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> January. Our main topic for discussion was ***NHS Backlogs***.

New members are always welcome so please get in touch with me if you would like to join us.

Glen Howard  
01833 631639

## **FRENCH CONVERSATION**

### **Report by Sue Overton**

A reminder that our group meets at 12 noon after the main monthly meeting in The Witham. You will find us in the gallery at The Witham, discussing (in French) various topics such as 'reducing meat consumption'. Is it a good idea? Why? How easy/difficult will it be for you? Any advice as to how to achieve this?

This topic will be discussed at our next meeting on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> January.

Fluency is not a necessity! All levels are welcome.

## **GARDENING GROUP**

### **Report by Sue Holmes**

Christmas in Narnia at Castle Howard, wow, amazing, fantastic, fab-u-lous, do you think I liked it? This was my third Christmas visit to Castle Howard and I have to say certainly the best.

The theme was *The Chronicles of Narnia* created by Charlotte Lloyd-Webber (no relation to Andrew). We started in the state bedrooms, dedicated to the children, Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy (using toys from Castle Howard, played with by the current resident, Nicholas Howard). We then moved through the wardrobe door to find the Snow Queen and followed a snowy corridor to the centre piece, a 28-foot Christmas tree covered in snow and icicles - created by using half a mile of lights. There was even the sound of crackling ice (did anyone see the channel 4 programme? It was certainly a struggle getting the tree in place). A light show projected onto the dome to complete the story. The whole Narnia experience took four weeks to complete, using 100 thousand lights and three thousand baubles, plus all the other trees, branches, flowers and whatever else they used. It was something you should probably go around twice, as it wasn't possible to take in everything the first-time around.

Anyone remember Tudor Croft gardens at Guisborough which we visited July 2019? They are opening to see the snowdrops 12, 13, 19 and 20 February, and for NGS 18 and 19 June.

### **Future meetings at Stainton Village Hall 1.45 pm**

4<sup>th</sup> February - Jill Cunningham, *Bugs, Beasties and Buzzers in My Garden*

4<sup>th</sup> March - Jago Wallace, *Himalayan Gardens, development and maintenance*

1<sup>st</sup> April - Martin Fish (subject to be decided)

## **GEOGRAPHY GROUP**

### **Report by Jane Harrison**

At our last meeting, Dr Sarah Woodroffe, Professor of Geography at Durham University, spoke about her research in Greenland.

The Arctic is experiencing greater warming than lower latitudes because polar amplification causes temperatures to rise above the global average. The loss of sea ice contributes to this, whilst melting of land-based ice and calving (splitting) of icebergs is causing the sea level to rise. Further problems are created by coastal retreat and the release of methane from the permafrost.

Ice covers approximately 80% of Greenland and is 2 to 3 kilometres thick at the centre. Surface temperatures there are around -20°C, so little melting occurs, but in warmer marginal areas, there is an overall negative balance. The Jakobshavn glacier has retreated 30 kilometres since 1850.

Warmer periods have occurred before in Greenland. Sarah's research focusses on past sea level changes. Analysis of lacustrine core samples and salt marsh deposits enables the reconstruction of the mass-balance history of Greenland's ice sheet and the associated crustal adjustments. Such research will enable the prediction of future sea level change. Much of Greenland lies within the Arctic Circle, so fieldwork is confined to the summer months. Sites are often accessible only by helicopter. Researchers must brave swarms of flying insects and sometimes polar bears!

Greenland was first settled 4,400 years ago by peoples from Siberia. The Thule, with their harpoons, dog sleds and kayaks arrived from Canada in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Arable farming and animal husbandry were introduced by the Vikings, who settled between 10<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries. The Danes arrived in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and eventually gained sovereignty over the island.

Today most of Greenland's 70,000 population live in small, nucleated settlements along the west coast. Often, the only means of transport between them is by air or by boat. Two-thirds of the economy is publicly owned and is based on fishing, construction, extraction of raw materials, and transport. The Danish government still provides a substantial annual subsidy.

Greenland faces an uncertain future. Increasing temperatures will bring some advantages but there will be a detrimental impact on traditional cultures and wildlife. On current predictions, Greenland could contribute an increase of between 5 and 15 centimetres to global sea level by 2100.

Sarah's excellent talk, with its beautiful photographs, gave the group much to think about. A more detailed report will be posted on the u3a website.

**Next meeting:** Thursday 20 January, Gerald Blake: *The Geography of the Holy Land*

## **iPAD AND iPHONE GROUP**

### **Report of Meeting 26 November 2021 by Mike Sweeting**

The screen pens went like hot cakes, so I shall order some more.

Our first session was a continuation of our review of iPad Settings. We looked through the Accessibility settings. Some might assume they don't need to look at these but

there are several areas where our interactions with the screen and the ways in which we see and listen can be enhanced.

There followed a presentation on the Apple Wallet. It was shown that this is an easy and secure way of making contactless payments. Some were eager enough that they were adding cards to their Wallets during the session. Wallet can also be used for storing ticket details and boarding cards.

After the break we tackled Facebook settings. Most of us use Facebook to find business details or follow groups like Barney Bits 'n Bobs and do not want to be pestered with unnecessary information and adverts. We went through Facebook's own tool for reviewing security and privacy settings and were able to gain more control over how our information is used and what we are given access to.

As the next session would have fallen on Christmas Eve, this has been postponed until 28 January 2022 when we shall meet again in The Witham.

## **LUNCH GROUP**

### **Report by Jan Fowler**

The Lunch Group has now met twice. In October, nine of us went to The Three Horse Shoes in Barnard Castle. There was a good and reasonably priced choice of menu and everyone enjoyed what they'd ordered. Four of our group were new Teesdale u3a members; indeed, some were new to Teesdale, so the conversation was interesting and lively.

In November, ten of us met at the very refurbished Thorpe Farm, off the A66. The menu was small but had a good range of dishes and the prices were reasonable (£10 - £12 for a main course). We all enjoyed the meal and the ambiance of the restaurant, and many of us explored the shop afterwards.

### **December Report by Jane Mathieson**

We met for our December meeting at Headlam Hall. As there were only a few of us, we dined in a room on our own which was lovely. The food was delicious and the conversation diverse. We all enjoyed the afternoon topped off by friendly and good service.

### **Venues for 2022**

January 19<sup>th</sup> - Clarendon's, Barnard Castle

February 16<sup>th</sup> - Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle

March 16<sup>th</sup> - The Fox Hole, Piercebridge

We meet at 12.15 and new members are always welcome.

## **NEEDLECRAFT GROUP**

### **December Report by Glen Howard**

As ever, it was lovely to get together with our stitching. We were able to sit in the sunshine in a conservatory, with the heating on, which was very cosy. Whilst we continued with our projects, knitting Christmas elves and gifts, plus some fair isle, embroidery and sewing, we had a lively discussion about burials/cremation which was by no means as dreary as the name might suggest! We also chose our menus for our 'Christmas' lunch which will be held in place of our January meeting. Our meeting in

February will be on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> when we should all have recovered from the festivities and be raring to get on with our various projects.

Glen Howard  
01833 631639

**PHILOSOPHY GROUP**  
**Report by Wallace Anderson**  
**Does God exist?**

The first chapter in Warburton's book –*Philosophy the Basics* - deals with the some of the arguments put forward by philosophers over the years for the existence of God, and deals with criticisms of those ideas.

How persuasive are the various theories and what are the arguments for and against? We dealt with three ideas at the meeting.

**The Design Argument**, sometimes also known as the Teleological Argument (from the Greek word telos, which means 'purpose').

If we look around us at the natural world, we can't help noticing how everything in it is suited to the function it performs:

everything bears evidence of having been designed.

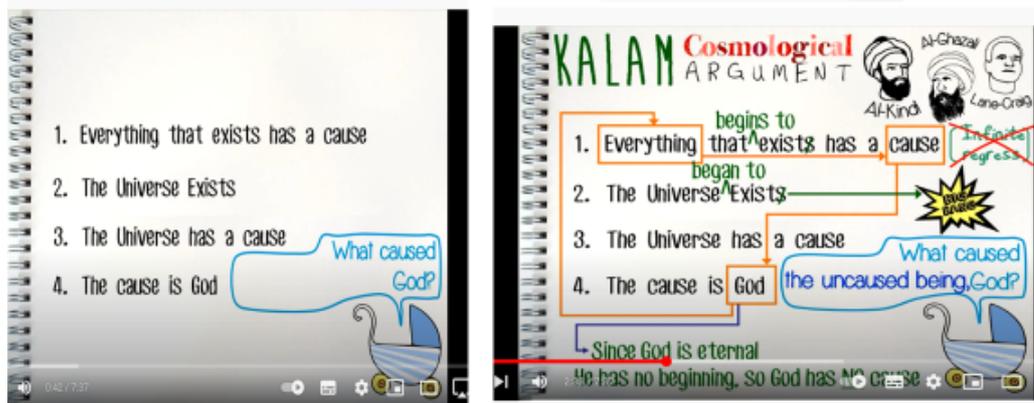
The existence of a Divine is not, however, the only possible explanation of how animals and plants are so well adapted to their functions. In particular, Darwin's theory of evolution provides a convincing alternative.

Despite the powerful arguments against the Design Argument, some recent thinkers have tried to defend a variant of it known as the Anthropic Principle. This is the view that the chance of the world turning out to be conducive to human survival and development is so tiny that we can conclude that the world is the work of a divine architect.

**The First Cause Argument** states that absolutely everything has been caused by something else prior to it: nothing has just sprung into existence without a cause. Because we know that the universe exists, we can safely assume that a whole series of causes and effects led to its being as it is. If we follow this series back, we will find an original cause, the very first cause. This first cause, so the First Cause Argument tells us, is God.

But is this contradictory? If there is no uncaused cause than what caused God see below for possible way out of this.

Since God is eternal he has no beginning.  
So God has no cause



**The Ontological Argument** does not rely on evidence at all. The Ontological Argument asserts that the existence of God necessarily follows from the definition of God as the supreme being.

God is 'that being which nothing greater can be conceived'.

One of the aspects of this perfection or greatness is existence. A perfect being would not be perfect if it did not exist. Consequently, from the definition of God, it is asserted that he or she necessarily exists just as it follows from the definition of a triangle that the sum of its interior angles will be 180 degrees.

At our next meeting in January, we are going to consider the rest of the first chapter and in particular deal with the problem of evil and then the argument from miracles, the gambler's argument, faith and death. In the February meeting, we will go on to Chapter 2 – *Right and Wrong*,

## **PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP**

### **December report by Jane Mathieson**

Six of us met on 7<sup>th</sup> December, including a new member which was good, and discussed the programme for the next few months, a calendar for 2023 and setting up a workshop ***Photography for Beginners*** to be run by members of the group.

12<sup>th</sup> Jan- meeting in the Gallery at 11am in The Witham to discuss costings for a calendar for 2023 and the workshop.

22<sup>nd</sup> Jan - Workshop- *Photography for Beginners*, County Room, The Witham, Barnard Castle 10am -1pm.

February or March - Snowdrops or Locomotion at Shildon.

April - Inside meeting with update on photos for calendar.

May or June - Day trip to Farne Islands or day at Fountains Abbey and Brimham Rocks.

The calendar will be titled ***Bridges of Teesdale*** and we will try to photograph as many of the ?19 bridges in Teesdale - not all have to be over the Tees - at different times of the year, with a piece about its history. We are looking at costings from anyone with ideas.

## **POETRY GROUP**

### **Report by Annie Clouston**

We have now had three poetry group meetings since the workshop that convinced us that an on-going group would be worthwhile. And so it has proved. We met in November, December and January, and each time brought poems on a theme agreed in advance. November's theme was *poems from the WW1 era*. They were sombre and deeply emotional of course, but also illustrated in the poetry of the time the developing anger and cynicism as the war went on, and on, and the casualties went on, and on.

Our theme in December was Christmas poetry, and we had some delightful and poignant contributions by among others, Wendy Cope – *A Christmas Poem* and *Wenceslas*, Benjamin Zephaniah *Talking Turkeys*, and a piece of prose – *Christmas Remembered* by Dylan Thomas, a memory of Childhood in Wales.

In January, a month when generally spirits take a dip, we decided on poetry and humour for our theme, and we were all cheered and had a good laugh. Once again, Wendy Cope, that mistress of the art of touching and accessible poetry, featured with *Engineers' Corner* and of course Roger McGough, an immensely likeable poet from that spectacular generation of Liverpoolians, with *At Lunchtime*, *a Story of Love* and *First Day at School*. Roald Dahl was represented with *The Three Little Pigs*, as did a fantastic parody of Browning's *How They Brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix* by W C Sellar and R J Yeatman, authors of *1066 and All That*. William Topaz McGonagall - who didn't know he was funny - also featured, and his paeon of praise to Robbie Burns' statue is printed later in this document. Of course, poetry evokes many reminiscences, some sad, some joyful and we talk about these things. It's good to talk!

If you want to receive a copy of the file of our poems of the month, please email me, but if you are interested in joining us in person, it would be good to have you. Our next meeting – carrying on the theme of humour (who said February was any better than January in its potential for gloom?) will be on Wednesday 9 February at 10am.

[annie@cloustons.uk](mailto:annie@cloustons.uk)

## **SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY GROUP**

### **December - Funny Science and Technology**

#### **Report by Karen Tranter**

This was the Group's Christmas meeting combining a social event with short talks from members. The theme for the talks was science and technology that strikes one as funny. Sadly, the number attending was very much lower than usual, but the standard of contributions was at its usual high level with titters of laughter at some of the things presented.

**Karen Tranter** kicked off with a description of Zhang Heng's Seismoscope. This ~2,000-year-old Imperial Chinese instrument is believed to have been an earthquake detector. Its large size and ornate design, with dragons dropping balls from their

mouths into toad mouths when a quake is detected, is impressive. Sadly, there are no detailed records of it, so its internal workings are unknown.

**Rob Mead** brought along an advertising booklet created by Heath Robinson in the late 1920's for The Practical Etching Co. Ltd. It was rescued from them by Rob's father. Heath Robinson took commissions from many businesses to apply his imagination in describing the business in his classic cartoon style. Roy Tranter also had some examples of Heath Robinson's work, including *Safety First Cricket* and *The Sunbathing Wheel*, both of which caused laughter.

Electric cars were the subject of **Barry Cook**. They have a long history, going back to 1834, with early vehicles either being locomotives/trams or converted horse carriages. Surprisingly, in the early 1900's, there were more electric cars than petrol (38% vs 22% - the rest being steam). These had very limited range and batteries were not rechargeable so they were eventually overtaken by internal combustion.

**Karen** described two more old inventions: alarm clocks driven by water (showing a Greek one dating from ~200BC) and the French Cyclomer, a very unstable bicycle with flotation wheels designed to go on land and water. She finished with Fatbergs and how material from them is being converted to biofuel for use in a power station.

**Roy** had more cartoons: a video of Rowland Emmett's *Car of the Future* mobile, Maurice Collin's *Eccentric Contraptions* and Jan Sanders' interpretation of how to paint ships. He ended with his own simulation of monkeys hitting typewriter keys randomly to create great literature (or not!)

The next meeting will be at 10.00am Monday 14 February at The Witham. Karen Tranter will talk about *Death by Poison – Agatha Christie's Skill*.

## **SCRABBLE GROUP**

### **Report by Paula Thompson**

We had our last Scrabble Group of 2021 on 13<sup>th</sup> December at Phil and Judith's house in Cotherstone. There were 7 of us attending, so we split into 2 groups, one of 3 and one of 4. There were some high scoring rounds, including some 7 letter words on a triple word square, scoring nearly 100. There were also some of us who had all vowels or all consonants on our racks making it very hard to get rid of tiles and pick up more.

Phil and Kate won their 1st games. We regrouped and played our second round. This was after we had a cup of tea and some delicious home-made mince pies made by Judith, and chocolate biscuits.

The second games also had some high scores, and these games were won by Liz and Ray. There is time for people to check their words in dictionaries, and lists of two and three letter word are provided and available.

Our next meeting will be on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2022 at Lillian's house, (depending on Covid rules). If you would like to join us, you can contact Lillian on 01833 650628.

**SPANISH CONVERSATION**  
**November/December Meetings**  
**Report by Lusia McAnna**

Les deseo a todos un feliz y saludable año nuevo. Wishing you all a Happy and Healthy New Year. Sadly, we were unable to have our annual Christmas lunch in November which was going to be a Tapas Potluck (bring your own), so we have postponed it until the spring, when we can enjoy our tapas outside in the garden. Until that time, our meetings will be by Zoom and the first one this year is on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> January at 14.00 hours with the topic of *A Special Christmas Memory*. Our February topic will be *My Favourite Relative*.

Speaking of tapas, there are many versions of how and where this Spanish tradition started. “Tapa” means a cover and one story from Andalucía says that slices of bread or ham were used to cover glasses of sweet sherry to protect the sherry from attracting flies. Inn keepers realised that salty foods made people thirsty, so they provided small snacks or tapas to encourage more drinking.

Another popular explanation says that King Alfonso XIII stopped by a famous tavern in Cadiz, an Andalusian city, where he ordered a cup of wine. The waiter covered the glass with a slice of cured ham before offering it to the king, to protect the wine from the beach sand as Cádiz is a windy place. The king, after drinking the wine and eating the tapa, ordered another wine “with the cover”. I understand that beer mats were used in Ye Olde Trip to Jerusalem pub in Nottingham to protect drinks from dust from the ceiling, a much less tasty version.

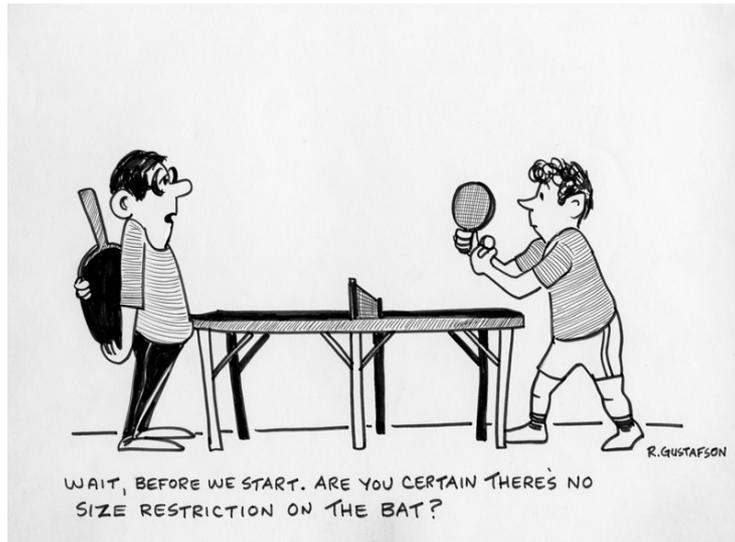
Whatever the provenance, it is certainly a lovely way to sample lots of different Spanish foods while having a drink.

Stay safe and well.

**TABLE TENNIS GROUP**  
**Report by Peter Singer**

Our small but enthusiastic group of up to ten players meets every Friday afternoon at 3pm at the Teesdale Leisure Centre for a lively hour’s ping pong (also known previously as “pim pam”, “whiff waff” or “gossima”, a game created by John Jaques of London, using bats like solid badminton rackets, a one-foot-high net and a cork ball). Our standard of play has gradually improved a little and, whilst we are unlikely to be troubling the British Olympic Association selectors anytime soon, we have a lot of fun and some healthy exercise. Even the occasional hiccup, such as a missing net, does not deter us – it’s surprising how well one can practise on a table using one’s imagination in place of a net!

The rules are few, fairly straightforward and easy to grasp, so practice is the key to success. The longest ever table tennis rally occurred in 1936 and lasted over two hours, and the record for hitting the fastest shots across the table is 173 shots in 60 seconds or almost 3 shots per second. We haven’t reached that speed yet, but you never know.



Some tips on honing one's ping pong skills are to stay focused, keep the ball on the table and go for awkward angles. Don't try too many risky or showy shots (well, maybe the odd wild smash may be excused for the hell of it) and make your serve count, as it's the only shot completely within your control. We are also beginning to get the hang of spinning the ball and how to play spin – bat face angled down hitting over the ball against topspin and bat face angled up hitting under the ball against backspin.

We are planning a trip to Ormesby Table Tennis Club in Middlesbrough on 19 February at 2pm to watch a British Premier League match and see how it should be done. From a previous visit, we know it will be fast, skilful and exciting to watch and, even if it is way above us, it is still inspiring to see what can be achieved in a basically simple game. The Ormesby club was founded in 1957 in a former chicken shed, with one table, but has gone on to win the European Club Cup in 1972 and the British League in 1991, as well as fielding a number of international players over the years.

If you fancy joining our group, whether you've played before or not, please contact our excellent and enthusiastic convenor, Celia Chapple (07783 419067). We would love to see you and have a game – even if we'll never break any records!

## **WALKING GROUPS**

### **SHORTER WALKS GROUP Report by Ian Royston**

#### **Circular walk from Staindrop – 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2021**

Staindrop is a pretty Teesdale village but not best suited as a centre for walking. To the north lies the 200 acre, walled Deer Park of Raby Castle whilst to the east lies the attractive, smooth tarmacked Coach Road from which public access has been curtailed in the past two years.

Necessarily, therefore, our circular walk was to the west and south. Eight of us set out on a cool but bright sunny afternoon from Staindrop's hub at Scarth Memorial Hall to leave the large village green through the quaintly-named 'Nicky-Nack' path where we



met the first of a grand total of 21 stiles. The walk soon took us off the Moor Road and the slow climb up a lane to Snotterton Hall, at 145m, the high point of our walk which commanded views over the village and a glimpse of Raby Park.

Another stile safely negotiated, we passed to the east of the farm and steeply downhill to the Sudburn Beck and onto footpaths (or were they sheep trails?) where we found many and varied qualities of carpentry across many more field boundaries. Fortunately, the beck was not in flood, and though recent light rain had made some parts a little damp underfoot, we were excused any quagmires

We crossed back over the busy A688 to continue following the beck downstream over yet more stiles, including the very challenging No. 15 with sharp nails, barbed wire and thorns, but now often in the company of Swaledale sheep.

Any fear that the fading late-autumn light would cause us issues were waylaid by the welcome sight of Staindrop Parish Church bathed in the warm light, not so far away.

Two stone stiles guarded the way over the minor road at Cleatlam Bridge before we made a beeline diagonally across open fields, one part of which will soon see a new housing development, (though plans show that the Right of Way will be preserved) to find the long-walled back gardens to the south of Staindrop's South Green and a symbol of the north-east working man (as featured in the short animation, a *Pigeon Cree*).

In just over 100 minutes, our 3.5 mile walk had taken us back to Staindrop's Scarth Hall where, as we chatted about our next adventure, we saw the beautiful red hues of a mackerel sky in the direction of Barnard Castle.

## **4-6 MILE WALKING GROUP & Christmas Lunch**

**Tuesday, 14<sup>th</sup> December**

**Report by Gillian Barnes-Morris**

The 4-6 mile walking group began their December walk from Newsham Village Hall car park (Sandra kindly arranged parking). From the car park we walked through the village to a track leading to Barningham Park, through a small wood with some very beautiful trees and into Barningham Village. Taking an upward road through Barningham, we aimed for the moorland above the village. From here we took a left hand path and climbed until we reached the highest point for a rest and to take in the wonderful vista below. From this high point, we took a long stony path to a road and that lead downwards back to Newsham. The weather was mild and the views were wonderful but our enjoyment was not over.

Our Christmas meal was held at Thorpe Farm where we enjoyed an excellent lunch which was held in a private (children's party room). As you can see, a couple of our members provided the entertainment....thank you Kathleen and Pete.



Next Walk: 10:00am, Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> January, Cotherstone  
Contact: Gillian 07941 852165

## **7-9 MILE WALKING GROUP**

### **Report by Nicky Grace**

Kathleen led us on a delightful circular 8-mile walk on 16<sup>th</sup> November, starting and finishing by The George Hotel in Piercebridge – all of the walk in the former North Riding of Yorkshire. It was a gloriously warm autumn day – rain in Barney in the morning but clearing at Winston as it so often does. Because of our recent warm weather, the leaves were still on the trees – browns, yellows, reds – a sight to behold.

We had been warned that the flattish walk would be through muddy turnip fields but it was quite dry underfoot and the turnips were not a problem! We set off by the bridge up through a wood and then over the fields by Cliffe Cricket Club. We passed Cliffe Hall built in 1859 with older outbuildings and mused on its ownership. Sighting a rainbow, we walked along a lane and then over more fields until we emerged at Eppleby where we had lunch on The Green.

After lunch, we left Eppleby and crossed the disused railway line which used to serve Forcett Quarry. Walking up by Aldbrough Beck there was a fish pass to help trout, eels and other fish to move upstream more easily.

Just after we passed Carlton Grange and Carlton Green, we noticed turnip fields full of white and purple flowers which our expert identified as flax and fiddleneck – I had never heard of the latter. It seems that it is known more commonly in this country as Blue or Purple Tansy. We had also noticed the black spots on many of the sycamore leaves – again confidently identified, when asked, as “black spot”! - later amended to the fungus Tar Spot!

On the way back by the Cricket Club, one member drew our attention to an oak tree that had appeared in the Guinness Book of Records for having the largest circumference. It was certainly enormous.

All in all, a most enjoyable walk led confidently and excellently by Kathleen – we all kept together, kept talking, and appreciated looking around us and sharing our knowledge on a day when the light was superb, the views clear and the autumn colours a sheer delight.

### **Report on Walk Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> December**

15 of us met our leader, Lynda, in the car park near Balderhead. Our goal was a circular walk to reach the summit of Shacklesborough. It is not well marked so we were delighted to have the benefit of an experienced leader.

The better weather at home turned into low cloud and some drizzle. We set off down the track to the head of the reservoir and the strong wind hit us full face. We passed a few Herdwick sheep who looked quizzical about our venture. Nothing daunted, we crossed the river to find a sheltered spot to enjoy our mince pies and coffee.

Lynda then led us across the moor warning us (correctly as some of us found out) that the plastic tracking on the shooters' tracks was slippery. The visibility declined as we picked out our own routes up to the trig point on Shacklesborough. With the briefest of nods to the (potential) marvellous views, we quickly descended to the shelter of the sheep fold for our lunch.

From there the weather began to clear and we enjoyed the descent back to the Balderhead reservoir.



A lone kestrel whooshed past us as well walked back along the spillway of the reservoir. The warmth of our cars beckoned.

This was a most enjoyable winter walk, especially for those of us who enjoyed the excellent Christmas fare at Thorpe Farm the day before. With thanks to Lynda for leading the walk and providing the mince pies, and thanks to Alan for the pictures.



### **Dates for your diary**

The next walk is a 7-mile town/country walk led by Phil, starting on the edge of Richmond on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> January. Meet 10:00 at the carpark at the bottom end of the racecourse nearly opposite the golf club 170022 Whashton Road (off road to Ravensworth) Richmond . The walk will take in the River Swale, Easby Abbey and Aske hall. Please let Nicky Grace know if you are interested in coming along [nickygrace729@gmail.com](mailto:nickygrace729@gmail.com)

Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> February will be a 7.5 mile walk led by Peter. The start point is the Broom Park picnic area; we shall walk along the old Deerness Railway, upon reaching a road, an ascent to reach Ushaw college. We continue round the back of Ushaw to finally reach the Old Lanchester Railway which leads us back to Broom Park picnic area.

Please let Nicky Grace know if you are interested in coming along [nickygrace729@gmail.com](mailto:nickygrace729@gmail.com)

## **FELL WALKING GROUP**

### **November report by Gordon Selley**

This walk should have happened in October but had to be cancelled because of stormy weather. So, on a grey and windy day, we left from Bowes village by cars to Sunbiggin Tarn which is approximately midway between Kirkby Stephen and Orton. We set off in indeterminate weather and climbed up the limestone outcrop of Great Kinmond, carefully avoiding slipping into the numerous grykes on the way. The normally breathtaking 360-degree view from the cairn at the top was transformed into clouds hugging the Howgill Fells and the Lake District hills were invisible.

After a short cold stop the party followed the vague tracks down over the limestone pavement towards Grange Scar and followed the wall to the single track road, crossed it, and continued on a track to the village of Little Asby. Here the group took a coffee stop out of the wind and appreciated the improving weather. From Little Asby, we followed the footpath through fields to the steep drop down into Potts Valley. The stream which is normally dry in the summer had water flowing through, so we took the bridge and walked south up the valley. Potts Valley is sheltered, not well known and hence quiet and beautiful. In springtime, the flowers are abundant with varied limestone loving plants.

Next walk Wednesday 26 January. If you would like to join us, please contact Annie: [annie@cloustons.uk](mailto:annie@cloustons.uk)

## LET'S GET QUIZZICAL, QUIZZICAL...

### January February Quiz

#### 'A cold collation'

1. Which ancient stone monument is aligned with the winter solstice sunset?
2. The Winter Palace can be visited in which city?
3. What is an irrational fear of snow?
4. The average snowflake travels at what speed?
5. What does the word "solstice" mean?
6. Which fruit has a 'Winter Banana' variety?
7. Which British bird turns white in winter?
8. What winter sport is sometimes called 'the roaring game'?
9. What is an Alberta Clipper?
10. What are Mukluks?
11. What are snow peas more commonly known as?
12. What is it called when an animal sleeps through winter?
13. What is the main cause of winter?
14. What is an Ushanka?
15. How much daylight is there at the North and South Pole during winter?
16. Which Caribbean country entered a bobsleigh team in the 1988 Winter Olympics?
17. January replaced which month as the first month of the Roman year?
18. Where is the festival of Up Helly AA held?
19. Which date in January is the traditional date for the feast of Epiphany?
20. Who originally wrote the fairy tale *The Snow Queen*?

### Christmas quiz answers

1. Eggnog
2. 4
3. An angel
4. Turkey
5. That glorious song of old

6. Ebenezer
7. Parson Brown
8. Eight maids a milking
9. The Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come
10. Hansel and Gretel
11. Dancer, Dasher, and Donner
12. A silver sixpence
13. 3pm
14. A 50-pence piece
15. Christmas day
16. Bohemia
17. Advocaat
18. Stollen
19. T. S. Eliot
20. Christmas tree, the Norway Spruce.
21. H<sub>2</sub>O
22. 364

### WHERE IN THE WORLD?



**25 January is Burns Night, the 263<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of his birth. The Forum is not backward in commemorating such a significant event**

### **The Haggis with Severe Burns**

(Extract from the Day Book of a Highland Veterinary Practice!)

In the early hours of Saturday morning we had what we thought was a injured haggis brought in, but after listening to the wee thing shouting 'fair fa' your honest sonsie

face..... Wee sleekit cow'rin tim'rous beastie.....' and 'some hae meat and canna eat' repeatedly for 2 hours, it was obvious he was suffering from severe burns.

We started him on an iron intravenous drip, hot toddies, and shortbread fed little and often,

By Saturday night he was looking much better. By Sunday he was starting to smile and looked a totally different haggis. By this afternoon he had finished the shortbread and the full bottle of whisky, was grinning lug to lug and is completely away with the fairies. We hope to sober him up and release him into the Grampians tomorrow.

### ***First Catch your Haggis*** by Brenda Williams

Through the heather, through the glen.  
Go the highland hunting men.

Wrapped warm in kilts 'gainst winter cold  
Only the bravest, and the bold.

For who knows where the Haggis hides  
Amidst these frozen mountain sides?

In the loch with neeps and tatties?  
Or lurking with the sheep and ratties?

They seek him here, they seek him there  
But none can find the Haggis lair.

This "chieftain of the pudding-race"  
Is lying low without a trace.

Only the piper and Selkirk Grace  
Can summon Haggis to this place.

But then with toasts, all passed around,  
We see the Haggis, firm and round.

The humble Haggis cooked and dressed  
Is here to feed men truly blessed.

So let this gathering on Burn's Day,  
Eat and drink and laugh and play.

Then, for this Chief of Scottish rhyme,  
Let's sing Burn's song of *Auld Lang Syne!*

**And would any celebration of the Great Scots poet be complete without this homage by an arguably equally prodigious and assiduous promoter of the Scottish heritage – William Topaz McGonagall (1825-1902).**

### ***The Burns Statue (A fragment)*** by William Topaz McGonagall

This Statue, I must confess, is magnificent to see,  
And I hope will long be appreciated by the people of Dundee;  
It has been beautifully made by Sir John Steell,  
And I hope the pangs of hunger he will never feel.

This statue is most elegant in its design,  
And I hope will defy all weathers for a very long time;  
And I hope strangers from afar with admiration will stare  
On this beautiful statue of thee, Immortal Bard of Ayr.

Fellow-citizens, this Statue seems most beautiful to the eye,  
Which would cause Kings and Queens for such a one to sigh,  
And make them feel envious while passing by  
In fear of not getting such a beautiful Statue after they die.

**Shame he won't be around to eulogise me!**

**And thanks to Phil, who, idling away his disappointment while watching Leeds losing at home, found this captured his mood –**

## **JANUARY**

A brand New Year, a brand new start  
Time to look forward with a fresh heart  
Promises we make to live life better  
To keeping dry while it just gets wetter  
To keeping warm as it just gets colder  
And all the while we're getting older

Think of covid but don't forget flu  
Welcome to twenty twenty-two.

That might seem gloomy but it ain't all bad  
There'll be plenty of good times to be had  
Spring is coming, so there's a chance  
Of maybe a quick trip off to France  
Or p'raps a visit to Clumber Park  
But just get back before it's dark  
A winters hike to blustery hills  
But more expensive heating bills

To the brand New Year we say hi  
Resolutions? Some say why?  
Or some drinkers will spend it dry  
Until it's time to say good bye

To January.

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### **PHOTOS OF THE MONTH by Pete Redgrave**

#### ***Grassholme in the snow***



### **Three barns**



### **GROUP ITINERARY AND CONTACTS**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Meeting Time</b>	<b>Contact details</b>
Art Appreciation	1 <sup>st</sup> Wed pm	Roger Stanyon 01833 631758
Birdwatching	3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday am	John Howard 01833 631639
Book Group 2	2 <sup>nd</sup> Mon pm	Elizabeth Long 01833 641494
Book Group 3 Room to Read	3 <sup>rd</sup> Wed pm	Annie Clouston 01833 637091
Chess		Diana Marks 01833 631616 07762 626912
Discussion	2 <sup>nd</sup> Fri am	Glen Howard 01833 631639
Film Appreciation	4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday 1.30pm	Judy Golds 07853 315627
French Conversation	4 <sup>th</sup> Thurs pm	Stella Kirton 01388 488919
Gardening	1 <sup>st</sup> Fri pm	Pauline Fawcett 01833 638020
Genealogy	1 <sup>st</sup> Thurs pm	Alan Swindale 01388 488348

Geography	3 <sup>rd</sup> Thurs 2pm	Gerald Blake 01833 650899
Geology	4 <sup>th</sup> Mon am	Bob Tuddenham 07812 378004
Historic Environment	2 <sup>nd</sup> Thurs 10am	Tim Meacham 07847 182554
iPad	2 <sup>nd</sup> Fri pm	Mike Sweeting 01833 630005
Italian Conversation	Every Wed am	Marie Jenkins 07754 205664
Lunch Group	3 <sup>rd</sup> Wed noon	Jane Mathieson 01388 710741
Needlecraft	1 <sup>st</sup> Mon pm	Glen Howard 01833 631639
Painting	2 <sup>nd</sup> Fri 10am	Val Hobbs 07900 497503
Philosophy	4 <sup>th</sup> Tues 10am	Ruth Sansom 01325 401850
Photography	1 <sup>st</sup> Tues	Jane Mathieson 01388 710741
Poetry	2 <sup>nd</sup> Wed am	Annie Clouston 01833 637091
Science and Technology	2 <sup>nd</sup> Mon am	Roy Tranter 01833 638288

Spanish Conversation	3 <sup>rd</sup> Thurs 10am	Lusia McAnna 01833 638989
Table Tennis	Every Friday 3pm	Celia Chapple 07783 419067
Theatre	Varies	Elizabeth Formstone 01325 374727
Travel/Day trip		Jane Mathieson 01388 710741
Understanding Classical Music	4 <sup>th</sup> Friday 10am	Bill Heyes 01833 640885
<b>WALKING GROUPS</b>		
Shorter walks 3-4 miles	4 <sup>th</sup> Monday Phone	Sue Overton 07512 368884
Walking 4-6 miles	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tues 10am Phone	Gillian Barnes-Morris 07941 852165
Walking 7-9 miles	3 <sup>rd</sup> Wed 10am	Nicky Grace <a href="mailto:nickygrace729@gmail.com">nickygrace729@gmail.com</a>
Fell Walking	4 <sup>th</sup> Wed	Annie Clouston 01833 637091
Wildflower Group	3 <sup>rd</sup> Mon pm Varies - phone	Kate Keen 07880 741151
Wine Group	3 <sup>rd</sup> Tues pm	Tim Meacham 07847 182554

Coming up at your  
Community Arts Centre

<b>Thurs 27 Jan</b> 7.30pm	<b>FILM - The Courier (12A)</b> with subtitles A true-life spy thriller, the story of an unassuming British businessman recruited into one of the greatest international conflicts in history.
<b>Sat 29 Jan</b> 7.30pm	<b>COMEDY - Ben Hart: Wonder (12+)</b> Britain's Got Talent 2019 finalist, West End star and multi award-winning magician.
<b>Sat 5 Feb</b> 2.30pm	<b>THEATRE - The Ballad of Mulan (10+)</b> Woman, Warrior, Legend: the real Chinese heroine that inspired Disney's animation and live-feature, <i>Mulan</i> .
<b>Sun 6 Feb</b> 2.00pm	<b>MUSIC - Barnard Castle Band – Live in Concert</b> A joint fundraising event for Barnard Castle Band and The Witham.
<b>Fri 11 Feb</b> 7.30pm	<b>BBC Radio 4: Any Questions?</b> Broadcast live from The Witham at 8.00pm. Tickets are free and allocated on a 'first-come, first-served' basis.
<b>Sat 12 Feb</b> 2.00pm	<b>FILM - No Time to Die (12A)</b> with subtitles James Bond's latest mission to rescue a kidnapped scientist turns out to be far more treacherous than expected.
<b>Thurs 17 Feb</b> 7.30pm	<b>FILM - The Last Bus (12A)</b> with subtitles An old man uses his free local bus pass to travel to the other end of the UK, carrying his wife's ashes in a small suitcase, 'taking her back.'
<b>Sat 19 Feb</b> 7.30pm	<b>SPOKEN WORD - Harry Venning: The Art of the Cartoonist</b> Award-winning cartoonist, comedy writer and performer, best known for his Guardian strip, <i>Clare In The Community</i> .
<b>Sun 20 Feb</b> 2.00pm	<b>SUNDAY CLASSICS – Deborah Thorne and Nicholas Butters</b> Cello and piano recital performing works by Beethoven, Debussy, Cassado and Franck.
<b>Thurs 24 Feb</b> 7.00pm	<b>DANCE – The Monocle (14+)</b> A newly created piece by <i>Rendez-Vous Dance</i> inspired by the secretly notorious 1930s Parisian lesbian club <i>Le Monocle</i> .