

## **TEESDALE U3A FORUM**

**Your monthly newsletter about interest  
groups and events in the Dale**

**February 2022 no: 22/02**

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

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**Registered Charity no. 1176746  
Established March 2007  
Founding Chairman: George Jameson**

**u3a** learn,  
laugh,  
live

## Chairwoman's Letter

Dear friends

Today, I saw a truly special performance at The Witham. Timed to coincide with the Chinese New Year, the production, a one-woman show, was developed from the legend of the Chinese general, Mulan. Over ten years, Mulan rose through the ranks of the army, concealing her female identity, which if discovered would have meant certain death. Appropriately, 2022 is the Year of the Tiger which is associated with the attributes of bravery, confidence and strong will. There was a poignant scene in the play when Mulan realised she could never go back and would forever be living on the fringe of society, trapped by those very tiger-like and traditionally male attributes that had made her a general. It made me think of how this conundrum is played out in 21<sup>st</sup> century life, when people feel forced to hide their vulnerabilities for fear of being shamed, punished or marginalised.

At a very trivial level, the question I posed members during the month via email was aimed at discovering whether members felt that self-talk was a sign of vulnerability. It provoked some very funny responses. Weirdly, there seems to be opprobrium attached to talking to oneself – as a child I frequently heard that “it was the first sign of madness”. If that is the case, I must have always been as mad as a hatter. I am clearly not alone. My highly unscientific findings from our members survey are revealed following the group reports.

Our new climate solutions group began this month on Zoom – a conscious eco-friendly choice – and will continue on the first Thursday morning of each month. During a month when we have been whacked with a monstrous rise in fuel prices the group is timely. How can we live more sustainably and support future generations?

What a pity we had to cancel our January monthly meeting. Back to normal now I hope, with a full programme for the rest of the year. Be sure to renew your membership, and perhaps think about joining a new group to get the full benefits. It is a source of great regret to me that I cannot manage to enjoy more of the opportunities we have on offer. If I ever get to feel bored I will indulge in a bit of self-talk: “Get yourself to the Wine-Tasting, Annie!”

With very best wishes to you all.

Annie

## **It's Your Forum**

Editors: Annie Clouston & Celia Chapple. This month's editor is Celia.  
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**DEADLINE FOR CONTRIBUTIONS for the next edition:**

**Tuesday 8 March 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)

**Next Forum deadline for contributions: Tuesday 8 March 2022**

**MONTHLY MEETING AT THE WITHAM**  
**Meetings assemble from 10.00am for a prompt start at 10.30am**  
**Tickets are no longer required so please come along.**

Guests are welcome to attend one of our meetings as a 'taster' before deciding whether to join. Children under 18 are NOT allowed to partake in group activities as guests, as they would not be covered by our insurance.

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

**Speaker 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: What are we doing? Why are we doing it?

**Thursday 24 March Maria Glot. *Saltaire Part 2 (1876 - 2018)***

Maria tells the story of what happened to Saltaire once the founder, Sir Titus Salt, died. It's fortunes were inextricably linked with the curse of The Manor House called 'Milnerfield' which successfully dispatched five mill owners to an early death before it was abandoned.

The talk covers the fortunes of the mill during the Boer war, first and second world wars, the 1950s boom and finally the demise of the mills and textile industry in the late 1960's with the import of cheap cloth from the colonies.

Once again it is a factual, but entertaining talk.

**Thursday 28 April Max Adams. *Unquiet Women***

Max Adams tells the stories of some restlessly curious, brave and intrepid women, who lived between the end of the Roman Empire and the dawn of the Enlightenment. Too long neglected, their fascinating experiences and achievements are full of insights into women's lives, and tell us much about why history excludes them.

## Membership Renewal For 2022-2023

**This is a note to all members whose membership numbers are 569 or lower, in other words who first joined before September 1st 2021.** Your membership is due for renewal by March 1st. The membership fee for 2022-23 is £20 per member (£16.50 for any associate members who are primarily members of another u3a). This can be paid in a number of ways:

- By cheque at either the February or March General Meeting
- By cheque posted to 'u3a Membership Secretary, 1a Station Terrace, Cotherstone, Barnard Castle, DL12 9PZ.'

Please make all cheques out to 'The Teesdale u3a Number two Account'.

- By BACS (Bank Transfer) made out as follows:

Account: The Teesdale U3A. Sort Code: 20-83-73. Account Number: 23470873

For BACS please type 'Mem, then your surname, then your membership number as your reference.

- By cash, but in a sealed envelope, please, with the member's or members' full name(s) written thereon.

We will not issue membership cards this year. If anyone requires a receipt, please let me have a stamped, addressed envelope. By renewing, you will get continuing access to our monthly meetings at The Witham, membership of any of our 37 interest groups, plus the chance to take part in our highly successful new range of 'one-off' events, as well as an online copy of our Forum magazine each month.

I do hope you are continuing to enjoy your membership; if you have any questions or are encountering any problems please don't hesitate to contact me by email at [simontimothymeacham@gmail.com](mailto:simontimothymeacham@gmail.com) or by phone at 07847 182554.

Many thanks for your continuing support.

Tim Meacham (Membership Secretary).

## Weekend Workshops

**February Workshop - The Beatles - REVISED DATE Saturday, 26 February 2-4pm** at the Guide HQ, Birch Road. A relaxed afternoon when Tim Meacham will take us through their history; play excerpts from their songs; get us to sing others and ask us to share our memories of The Fab Four. For a place, contact Hazel Yeadon:

[hazelyeadon@hotmail.com](mailto:hazelyeadon@hotmail.com)

**More workshops overleaf....**

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**Saturday 26 March 2pm** at Guide HQ, Birch Road ***Entertaining Under Tens Happily***, This workshop is dedicated to all those who have child-care duties from time to time. With the Easter holidays coming up, we will share ideas about entertaining happily under tens and at the same time enjoying ourselves. Please contact Annie Clouston if you want to book a place. The cost, to cover room hire, is £5. [annie@cloustons.uk](mailto:annie@cloustons.uk)

**\*\*The Observatory workshop is now fully subscribed.\*\***

**Saturday 2 April 8pm - 11pm Dark Skies Night at Grassholme Observatory.** Tickets cost £19 per person (65yrs+ and blue badge holders) or £23 for under 65s. Numbers are limited to 20 per event.

The evening will involve a presentation by Gary Fildes, Astronomer, and use of the telescopes to view the spring constellations.

If you would like to book a place, please make your cheque payable to Teesdale u3a and send to Sue overton at 5 Cecil Road, Barnard Castle, DL12 8AL. If you require further information:

Email [sueoverton@hotmail.com](mailto:sueoverton@hotmail.com) or mobile no: 07512368884

#### **Embroidery Workshop Report by Hazel Yeadon**

The second embroidery workshop was held on Saturday, 22 January in the Guide HQ when 12 of us enjoyed making a bookmark. Once again led by Elaine Hicks and Janet Sweeting we were asked to select items from their vibrant array of silks and materials and shown stitches to use from the delightful samples they had done previously. No one completed their bookmark in the time available, but I for one will definitely be completing mine at home having been shown what to do. Once again everyone said it had been a very pleasant, relaxed way to spend a winter afternoon and we thank Elaine and Janet for giving their time and expertise voluntarily for a second time.



## **U3a Trip—Snowdonia & Portmeirion**

**Monday 27<sup>th</sup> June 2022 for 5 days**

**Royal Victoria Hotel, Snowdonia, Llanberis**

**Dinner, bed and breakfast with porter service at hotel**

### **Monday 27<sup>th</sup> June 2022**

Depart Barnard Castle and travel to Chester for a lunch break and time at leisure

### **Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> June 2022**

Morning tour of Snowdonia with stop at Betws-y-Coed and afternoon at leisure in Llandudno

### **Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> June 2022**

Single rail journey between Porthmadog & Blaenau Ffestiniog followed by a visit to Portmeirion Village & Gardens

### **Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022**

Scenic tour of Anglesey plus a 75 minute Puffin Island Cruise. With an abundance of wildlife in their natural habitat this is a chance to see seabirds, grey seals and bottlenose dolphin.

### **Friday 1<sup>st</sup> July 2022**

Depart Llanberis with an en route stop at Bolton Market for lunch break time before returning back to Barnard Castle

**Price per person - £599** based on a minimum of 20 passengers sharing

Twin/Double rooms still available. 2 x double rooms for sole use with a supplement of £111 per person. The deposit is £60 per person at time of booking. This group will be led by Carol Hunter & Jane Mathieson.

**To book, please contact**

**Carol Hunter , Kyle Travel – 01833 690303**

## **Group Reports**

**Room To Read Book Group Report by Gaynor Hemming**

**My Antonia by Willa Cather**

We were surprised to learn that this had been a popular book with students when set as a GCSE text and also surprised that it had been pronounced " the greatest romantic novel to come out of America" by the critic H.L Mencken. **Continued overleaf.....**

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We none of us could agree with this verdict but did find it a rich novel in many ways.

The last of the Great Plains Trilogy, Cather is at her best writing about what she knows : the endless monotony of the Nebraskan prairie with its colourful and resourceful inhabitants, the early settlers, and the harshness of their lives. Thus we learn about the day to day domestic life of the settler community, farming practices, camaraderie and neighbourliness, religious beliefs, snakes and the rigors of the extreme weather conditions. Against this back -drop, Cather peppers her tale with fireside horror stories, quite possibly true, including of a pair of brothers (?) who abandon a bride and groom to the wolves on a sleigh journey, and a husband who murders his wife. There is a strong sense of lawlessness in the newly established communities, but coupled with a moral and social code which is at times cohesive but can also be stifling.

We loved the many lyrical passages describing the landscape, but were far less convinced by its main characters. These are Jim Burden, who arrives on his grandparents farm in Nebraska having been orphaned, and Antonia, the eldest daughter of a Bohemian family. the Shimerdas, who have unwisely moved to Nebraska hoping for a better life. They are duped into paying too much to the owner of the dug-out and land that they move to, and Antonia's father, who has been a musician in his homeland, is eventually overcome with homesickness and hopelessness and takes his own life. This part of the tale is graphically dealt with but sympathetically and colours Antonia's future life.

Willa Cather seems to have been ambivalent about her own sexuality and the depiction of the relationship between Jim and Antonia does not convince. We only ever see Antonia through Jim's eyes, since he is the narrator of the story, and therefore never have any idea of her inner life and feelings. It is as if she has been mythologised and is always just out of our reach. Jim himself also seems shadowy, especially as an adult. At the end of the novel, when Jim meets Antonia again after a gap of 20 years, by which time she has a husband and 11 children, Jim confides in one of her boys that he was "very much in love" with Antonia in his youth. Yet he has done nothing to pursue her as a lover, accepting the social norms of his upbringing and "getting on" while she has struggled with much personal tragedy. At the end of the novel Jim tells us that "whatever we had missed, we possessed together the precious, the incommunicable past". Somehow this did not ring true, or compensate for his neglect.

As a recommendation for a reading group we gave it 3 out of 5, as it did provoke a lively discussion, but as a recommendation for friends we couldn't give it more than 1.

### Room to Read Book Group Schedule January – June 2022

Date	Title	Author	Chosen by
19 January	<i>My Antonia</i>	Willa Cather	Liz
16 February	<i>The Light Between the Oceans</i>	M L Steadman	Sue
16 March	<i>Stoner</i>	John Williams	Annie
20 April	<i>Clara and the Sun</i>	Kazuo Izuguro	Ruth
18 May	<i>Sad little Men</i> (TBC)	Richard Beard	Gaynor
15 June	<i>Red Dust Road</i>	Jackie Kay	Kate

### Climate Solutions Group (first) Zoom meeting.

#### Report by Kate Bailey

Many thanks to Simon and Jane who tuned into the first Zoom meeting and condolences to Liz, whose electrician turned off her power part way through!

We decided the format should be more informal and flexible than some u3a groups, with a small core of members who decide topics, activities, events, etc, and an open invitation to all members.

I was delighted to see that there is already a lot of energy and enthusiasm amongst the group's 'founders'. We had a very animated conversation about activities that help us to reduce our individual carbon footprints or make us feel we are contributing to the improvement of our local environments. For example, litter picking on walks, avoiding plastic (not easy - a good topic for future discussion), contributing to local authority consultations around waste management (we could collate a list of useful contacts in Durham Council), keeping track of any financial incentives to help people on low incomes to insulate their homes.

We also agreed that we prefer to talk about practical actions rather than listen to lots of technical or political 'lectures'. The meetings will be on Zoom in winter and we'll plan to meet face to face after March. We'll use the Form newsletter to pass on useful and interesting web-links, podcasts and book suggestions to everyone, and Top Tips for each month.

For example, bookings for a zoom talk *Climate Crisis - Some Solutions* on 23 March 2022 are available via the u3a Online Learning Event web-page: <https://u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events>

Some subjects will hopefully attract members of other groups to join us

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on occasion, for example, walking group members who are interested in land management, garden group members who are interested in soil health and alternatives to peat, wildflower group members who are concerned about the survival of some Teesdale plant species. Gerald's Geography group is likely to cover a few topics that overlap our interests and we plan to keep in touch.

Thanks to Jane and Gerald who have recommended the book *How bad are Bananas?* which provides a useful catalogue of the carbon footprint of all sorts of things including wine (look out the Wine Appreciation Group!)

### **Top Tips for March:**

- after 'dry January' or 'Veganuary', start to establish long term sustainable changes to your diet by gradually replacing 'ultra-processed' factory foods with home-cooked fresh produce;
- cut down on 'takeaway' plastic and paper waste - take a reusable cup, thermos flask, washable food containers, insulated food bag, etc;
- cut down water use, request a (free) water meter, flush the toilet less often;

**Next meeting 3rd March @ 10am** on Zoom Ongoing Programme/  
Avoiding plastics/ 'Top Tips for April'

### **Discussion Group January Report by Glen Howard**

It was good to meet up again in this new year. Our items of news included the Duke of York scandal (and Jimmy Saville); smart motorways; Barney's Christmas lights; MPs' drinking; Russian aggression in Ukraine; and Chinese influence.

The NHS backlog was our main topic and it was noted that apart from the effect of Covid on the service, the lack of doctors, because many are retiring early, and the lack of recruitment, partly due to restricted numbers of places on training courses, played a part in the discussion. The number of staff that are likely to be fired because they haven't received jabs will add to the difficulties. Members felt that whilst they would prefer to be treated by fully vaccinated staff, they would welcome treatment whoever delivered it if the only alternative was to wait.

Our next meeting will be at 10.15am on Friday 14 February 2022 when our main topic for discussion will be *Parliamentary Sleaze*.

New members are always welcome so please get in touch with me if you would like to join us. Glen Howard 01833 631639

### **Gardening Group Report by Pauline Fawcett**

There is not a great deal to report this month as due to an unfortunate set of circumstances, we were unable to access the hall (despite a game of hunt the key code throughout Stainton). Apologies to everyone who turned up and stood around in the incredibly cold conditions. This is the first time it has happened and I'm assured it won't happen again.

Our speaker, Jill Cunningham, will return in the autumn to deliver her presentation on *Bugs, Beasties and Buzzers in Her Garden*.

#### **Ongoing Programme, Stainton Village Hall 1.45pm**

**4 March:** Jago Wallace, *Himalayan Garden*

**1 April:** Martin Fish

Our first garden visit of the year will be on Friday **6 May** to **The Himalayan Garden and Sculpture Park** near Ripon. The price will be approximately £27 but we are waiting for the 2022 price for entry to the garden before we can finalise this. Most of the garden is not wheelchair accessible as there are steps and steep paths. There is a tea-room where food can be eaten in or taken out but at present cash is not accepted when ordering food.

Please let me know if you are interested in going on the visit. Other details will follow. We will be booking other garden visits and will pass on the information as soon as we have it. [paulinefawcett59@gmail.com](mailto:paulinefawcett59@gmail.com)

### **Genealogy Group Report by Alan Swindale**

Due to low numbers, the group has met by Zoom in January and February. The January meeting discussed the 1921 census which was released that day. The topic for the February meeting was *Researching Irish Ancestry*.

Researching Irish family history before 1920 is difficult because

- a) Destruction of the Public Record Office in Dublin in June 1922 means loss of: 1821, 1831, 1841 and 1851 census; over 50% of Church of Ireland parish registers; wills and court records
- b) 1861, 1871, 1881 and 1891 census records were destroyed by bureaucratic mistake
- c) Civil registration does not begin until 1864 for all births, deaths and marriages
- d) Roman Catholic parish records before the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century have only partly survived.

Unfamiliar and inconsistent place names and surnames add to the difficulty. The researcher needs a fair degree of luck – represented in the slides by a four-leaf clover – to find the individuals sought amongst

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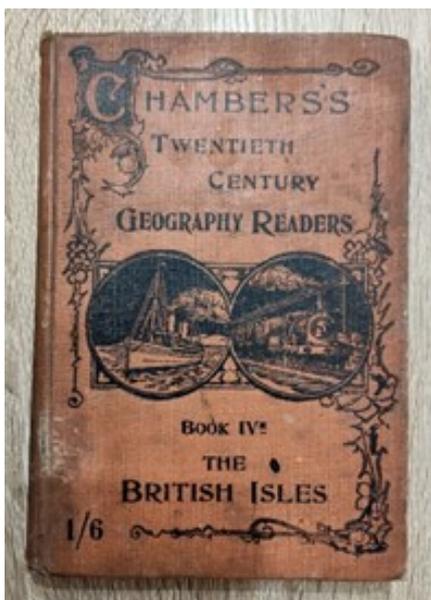
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those records which do survive. Progress is possible, even if not guaranteed, provided the researcher follows up on all those sources which are available. A quick run through of these sources was inadequate to illustrate the possibilities.

The March meeting topic will be *Wills and Probate* in family history research. The zoom meeting is on the first Thursday of the month at 2pm. Details will be circulated to Genealogy group members nearer the time. Alan Swindale [ajs@fivenine.co.uk](mailto:ajs@fivenine.co.uk) 01388 488348

### **Geography Group Report by Jane Harrison**

The group was treated to a geographical 'Smorgasbord' for their January meeting, with contributions from several speakers. Gerald started by recommending *Marvellous Maps*, a series of themed maps of Britain, and *The Climate Emergency Atlas* (2020) by D. Hooke. The



book theme was continued by Phil Johnson, who had discovered some fascinating old geography text books and atlases, dating between the 1880s and the 1930s. Not all had publication dates, but Phil had worked out the approximate dates based on map boundaries, place-names, and photographs. The British Empire was a recurrent theme, but the stereotypical view of geography being the rote learning of rivers and capital cities was proven incorrect. Some topics appeared surprisingly complicated for primary school pupils! Phil hopes to give a further talk on the subject. More photographs of his books will be posted on the group section of the u3a website.

Gerald gave a shorter version of his talk, *The Geography of Bethlehem at the Time of the Nativity*, which was first given on zoom in December 2020. A report of this is available online, in the Forum Newsletter, dated January 2021.

Phil followed with an introduction to the *Geography and Geology of South Africa*. He recommended *50 Must-See Geological Sites in South Africa* (2015) by G. Whitfield, as useful background reading. To understand South Africa's present geography, you need to look at its

geological past. Plate tectonics created the broad structure of its landscape and rock type influences its scenery. Precious stones and minerals form the basis of its mining industries.

Using his photographs, Phil gave us a quick armchair tour of some of the country's regions, focussing on the mountains of the Drakensberg and the gently sloping plateau of the Highveld. He described their differing climates, soils, and vegetation. He touched briefly on the impact of human activity on the environment. We look forward to a more detailed presentation on a future occasion.

The meeting finished with an introduction to the new u3a Climate Change Discussion Group, by its Co-ordinator, Kate Bailey, the details of which are now on the group section of the u3a website.

Next meeting: Thursday 17 March. 2pm. This will be a Zoom presentation by Professor Mattias Green, a leading scientist on tides and sea level change, from the School of Ocean Sciences, at Bangor University.

### **Geology Report by Bob Tuddenham**

The group continues to meet on Zoom twice a month and since the last report there have been four well attended meetings looking at some contemporary earth science issues.

On 22 November, Les Knight gave a fascinating talk: geologists can now measure how the Earth's climate has changed over geological time i.e. over hundreds of millions of years. It is clear that there are many factors that influence the climate and trying to ascertain the most significant of these is very difficult.

In our final session before Christmas, we had a varied and interesting general meeting given by Trevor Morse. In the first part, Trevor looked at the recent earthquake in Scotland and then the volcano on La Palma that, as expected, has calmed after a few months. In the second half, Trevor outlined two major causes of our current climate change crisis and posed questions about the effectiveness of the measures that we plan to take to mitigate this temperature rise.

In our first meeting in January, Trevor Morse gave a very useful talk about BGS maps and how to use them. In our main meeting later in the month, Les Knight gave another excellent talk, this time on the *Diversity of Life in the Fossil Record*.

These main talks are recorded on zoom so if any member would like to see them please contact Bob Tuddenham who will send the link.

Bob Tuddenham: 07812 378004

### **iPad & iPhone Group January Report by Mike Sweeting**

The regular feature on Settings continued with a look at WiFi, Bluetooth and Airplane Mode. WiFi is the universal wireless communication system in buildings and often in town centres giving access to public networks such as those in The Witham. It was emphasised that care needs to be taken over privacy when using open public WiFi or allowing others to use your home WiFi.

In the final part of our communications strand, we looked at WhatsApp. Not many in the group currently use the app. The features, including the recently introduced facility to link to WhatsApp on desktop or laptop computers, and benefits, were discussed and demonstrated.

A question had been asked in a previous session about creating email groups in Mail. As a preamble, we looked at how new email accounts are set up and controlling more than one email account through Mail. We referenced the recommended text *iPad for Seniors in Easy Steps*, specifically the chapter on Emailing.

Mail groups are created in the Contacts app but not, it turns out, without using a separate (non-Apple) app. They can, however, be created on Mac or MacBook computers or through iCloud.com; they will then be replicated in Contacts on the iPad or iPhone. Typing the name of the group in the address box in Mail then adds the complete list to the new email.

The final topic of the day was about transferring all the information and settings from an old device to a new one. Apple has made this a straightforward process as we would expect if they want us to regularly buy new kit.

### **Lunch Group Report by Christine Watkinson**

This was the first lunch group meeting of 2022 and Jane Mathieson our organiser had arranged for us to meet at Clarendons on Wednesday 19 January.—Probably a very good decision as January weather can be difficult. We needn't have worried as it turned out to be a beautiful day!

Clarendons have an extensive menu and a specials board with plenty of hot and cold food. Unfortunately, when it came to the desserts some choices were more popular than others, so they only had one fruit crumble left! I felt a little guilty as I took the last portion, however I don't think my fellow diners were disappointed with their choices, judging by their clean plates! The food, presentation and service were all excellent, so lunch finished after some lively conversation.

The next lunch meeting is on 16 February at The Bowes Museum Cafe at 12.15pm. 16 March meeting is at The Fox Hole, Piercebridge 12.15pm. All new members welcome.

#### **Needlecraft Group Report by Glen Howard**

This was our first proper meeting this year so there was some catching up on news to be done as well as working on our various projects. Many of us were doing knitting (this is always easy to transport and can often be carried out without having to really concentrate, leaving us free to chat) but embroidery and crochet were also in evidence.

Our next meeting will be on Monday 7 March. Please get in touch with me if you would like to join us. Glen Howard 01833 631639

#### **Philosophy Group January Report by Clare Tuddenham**

Our January meeting saw us grappling once more with the thorny question of whether God exists, in a session led by Wallace and Clare. You might think that, after spending two meetings on this topic, we would have come to a conclusion one way or another. This, though, is a philosophical question, and so of course there are no final answers.

Our journey of enquiry considered free will, the problem of evil, miracles, Pascal's wager and more, finishing, appropriately enough, with a look at death. Along the way we looked at the contributions made by some of the major philosophers such as Plato, Epicurus, Hume, Schopenhauer and Spinoza to this most fundamental issue.

Final answers may be lacking but there was plenty of food for thought and discussion.

Our next meeting, which we hope will be face-to-face, will be on Tuesday 22 February, when we'll be looking at another of philosophy's big questions, right and wrong. This topic is set to continue in our March meeting which will be on Tuesday 22 March.

#### **Photography Group Report by Peter Redgrave**

On the morning of Wednesday 2 February, the Photography Special Interest group visited Shildon's Locomotion Railway Museum....not necessarily a place where one might expect one of the country's premier railway museums, unless, of course, you know a little about the area's history. Shildon is on the eastern edge of the South-West

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Durham Coalfield, and necessity being the mother of invention, connecting Durham collieries with the Darlington-Stockton mainline for rapid transport of coal to the coast, was the imperative. Consequently, this is where the world's first steam-powered public railway sprang to life.

The Locomotion Museum offered bountiful photo-opportunities - but not without challenge. Parts of the museum were bright and well lit, while directly adjacent areas were dark and murky - tricky. So contrary to the song:

*My little baby sister can do it with ease*

*It's easier than learning your A B C's*

*So come on, come on, do the locomotion with me.*

Taking good photographs in this environment was done with anything but "ease". And never mind A, B, C, it was camera shutter speed, aperture and chip sensitivity we all struggled with. At least we had a tune to hum.

After an initial coffee and chat, we all dispersed to various parts of the enormous shed and spent a happy couple of hours taking lots of pictures of the amazing display of rail exhibits - thank goodness electrons are cheaper than film. It means we can throw all the bad ones away without regret.



### **Photography Workshop Report 22 January by Jane Mathieson**

The Photography Group held a 3-hour workshop in The Witham that explored why people might want to consider exercising some more control over their cameras, rather than just relying on the “Auto” mode. The workshop was well attended (13 participants) with a mixture of “old hands” and relative newcomers present. There were interesting presentations—*Basics of Photography*, *Control of Exposure*, and *Composition* as well as a more practical “hands-on” session taking photographs, where we looked at how particular choices of aperture and shutter speed affected the kinds of image produced. Feedback on the workshop was very positive with requests for more workshops in the future. Another workshop is being organised on 19 February looking at participants’ photos, good and poor, to see how improvements could be made, and in small groups looking in greater depth at how the functions on your camera can be found and used.

Jane has a detailed summary of various considerations on the following topics:

Composition: Summary—Organisation of elements within the photograph; Suggestions to make photos interesting; Photographic intent.

Here is a sample: Photographic Intent

1. Planned or reactive: Planned enables you to take time to get things right. Reactive, just shoot....good idea to return camera to auto-setting to be ready for the unexpected.
2. Anticipation: Be aware of what might be about to happen and be ready for when it does.
3. Multiple shots: With dynamic subjects hold your finger on the button and take lots of shots – one might be a good one, and electrons are cheap.
4. Documentary or Art: Documentary – think about what makes a good shot. Art – no rules, just paint with the camera!

Please contact Jane if you would like this workshop summary.

Jane Mathieson [JaneM1947@hotmail.com](mailto:JaneM1947@hotmail.com)

### **Spanish Conversation - January Report by Lusia McAnna**

Our January Zoom meeting took place 17 January (thanks to Bob). The topic was *A Special Christmas Memory*. There were just 3 of us, with apologies from 5 members, 2 who were happily skiing in Europe.

One special Christmas memory was that of a carol service in Salisbury

**Continued overleaf....**

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cathedral, attended with her son and three grandchildren, one of whom was dressed as an angel. During the service, two donkeys, one of them carrying the Mother and Child and three camels, walked around the church, their handlers, dressed in flowing multi-coloured robes. The animals remained calm and dignified, undisturbed by the singing or audience. A magical event.

Another member recalled his first Christmas away from family in Almeria, Spain, when he witnessed the magic of Christmas in a different culture. It was the Epiphany, celebration of the arrival of the Three Kings. In Spain, children receive gifts from them and as it is a port, they, of course, arrived on a fishing boat. The children were very excited to see the boat with the elaborately dressed figures of the crowned Kings arrive, who then boarded three regal carriages pulled by motorised reindeer. These toured the town with the Kings throwing sweets for children, who carried bags to gather as many as possible. He felt sorry for the parents of younger children trying to get them to sleep through the excitement, a little like on Christmas Eve in England as children wait eagerly for Santa Claus to come down the chimney.

One had memories of Christmas with two very different sets of grandparents in Chesterfield; one home was staunchly Methodist and one Communist. The Communist household was bare with no decorations or music, and any cards received were kept in a box. The Methodist household was full of cheer, warmth and singing, carrying on the Derbyshire tradition of Mummers plays at Christmas. You can guess where he liked to spend more time.

A very special memory for another is Christmas Eve, celebrated with a 12-course vegetarian meal, after which the family all gather around the Christmas tree and only by the light of candles, sing traditional Polish and English carols until it is time to open presents.

Our February 17 Zoom topic will be *My Favourite Relative*.

Stay safe and well.

**Table Tennis Group Report by Peter Singer**

Something of a seismic shock reverberated through the table tennis group last week, as our convenor, Celia Chapple, has handed over her role organising our activities. We owe a huge thank you to Celia for all her efforts in looking after bookings, subscriptions and equipment, as well as for her enthusiasm and energy and making new members feel welcome. This report writer has (with some trepidation) taken over as convenor, keeper of ping pong balls and spare net, and

hopes to be able to carry on the good work.

The group continues to thrive, with sufficient numbers to ensure a mixture of singles and two doubles games most weeks and we enjoy both the exercise and the social side. We take the game seriously and try to improve, but there are plenty of laughs as well - some of our shots would make even a sphinx smile. That's not to say we don't play to win and we manage some reasonable rallies and an occasional outright winner, which sometimes comes as a surprise but is always very satisfying. Maybe consistency is the holy grail we all seek.



In November last year, Table Tennis England celebrated the 100th anniversary since the game came under a national governing body, first as the Ping Pong Association in 1921, then as the Table Tennis Association in 1922 and the English Table Tennis Association between 1927 and 2014, when it became Table Tennis England.

The Ping Pong Association had been revived after becoming defunct in 1904, but the name had to be changed because Ping Pong was a registered trade name. Astonishingly, we haven't received an invitation to the Centenary Gala Dinner in March (one of those inexplicable oversights), but we haven't taken offence and will carry on enjoying the game regardless

Please contact Peter on 07508 663998 if you would like to join the group, whether you have played before or not. We play at Teesdale Leisure Centre every Friday afternoon between 3pm and 4pm.

### **Shorter Walks 3-4 miles Report by Jean Bartle**

On 24 January an unexpectedly high number of people set off from Barnard Castle Post Office on a bright, sunny afternoon and headed for the Green Bridge, picking up a fourteenth person at the Blue Bell Inn.

It was a straight forward circular walk, along the river on one side, crossing the Abbey Bridge and walking back along the river on the other side.

There were only two short bits of road walking, i.e. through the caravan park, and at Egglestone Abbey, where there was a small pause while some walkers had a closer look at the Abbey.

After crossing over Abbey Bridge we turned left into a wooded area. This part was a bit tricky underfoot, stoney and tree roots causing some difficulty, but was negotiated well by all walkers. The final stretch of the walk was along the river, through grassy fields, past the ruined mill

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towards the Lower Demesnes. Here, a heron was spotted, but standing so still some wondered if it was real. Snowdrops spiking through the hard ground, flowers on the gorse bushes and catkins on trees all promised of Spring to come even though it was only January.

Some of the party headed up the hill towards the town where there is an abundance of tea shops to choose from, and others decided to go straight home.

It was a pleasant afternoon, the weather held, it wasn't too cold and the walking underfoot was dry and firm most of the way. There were no accidents on the actual walk (which couldn't be said for the recce, when one of the leaders slipped and fell!) The walk was three and a half miles and took one hour and thirty minutes.

### **7-9 Mile Walking Group January Report by Nicky Grace**

A large group of us met Phil in the rather windy car park by Richmond racecourse – the highest point of the walk. It was a lovely clear day. A total of 21 of us, once we had picked up the second Phil, we set off for the long descent down into the town, to the river and the former station. We passed through sheltered historic streets and alleys and enjoyed the street scene. Having gained level land, we walked the ever popular route to Easby Abbey, a place new to some of the group. Here we partook of refreshments and enjoyed the tranquility of the ruins.

We crossed arable land passing St Trinian's to reach the edge of Skeeby. We then walked in single file across through fields of brassica whilst the sun continued to shine.

Reaching the road to Gilling West, we passed a cluster of building converted to holiday accommodation including an industrial looking chimney from a former grain store. Crossing the road, we walked a short distance uphill to the shelter of a small barn and a well earned lunch stop.

Phil then led us through the Aske Hall grounds, passing the imposing 1887 stable block which is now a commercial office block. We then walked just in front of the hall, owned by the Marquess of Zetland, with fine views of the lake. The hall incorporates a 15<sup>th</sup> century pele tower but has been much altered even in the 1960s being reduced in size and taking on a new Georgian appearance ( if that isn't a contradiction).

We then ascended to reach the golf course, where we avoided annoying the golfers and reached the road below the car park. We returned to our starting point at 14 20. Many thanks to Phil for leading us on a varied walk in an area which was new to many of us.

**Date for your diary** The March walk will be on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> – details to follow.

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

### **Fell Walking Group Report by Annie Clouston**

What do you call a collection of fell-walkers? Answers please! A fellblock? A strenuosity? A cagoulia? When fifteen of us turn up, on a furiously windy, drivingly wet, and moderately arduous trek, perhaps any or all of these might fit.

Gordon and Jenny led us from the fountain in Middleton via King's Walk, Hudeshope Beck and then onto Monk's Moor. Over to Egglestone Burn before returning over the Moor to Snaisgill and back into Middleton across fields. We were warned beforehand that the leg muscles would be properly tested and so they were. There was steady climbing and plenty of evil rabbit holes in rough ground to wrench boots out of, and a 'ford' that tested the balance too. So perhaps we ought to add 'a workout' to the list of possible collective nouns. We were accompanied along the way by the grouse-survivors of this year's inhibited shooting season. They seemed quite jolly to have escaped, having a chat and a flutter by our sides. When the sky cleared, and it did, we had good views in all directions, but couldn't quite see the sea.

Despite the initially inclement weather we had a good walk in good company and had good refreshments in the café on the corner in Middleton on our return. Many thanks to Gordon and Jenny for a grand day on the fells.

Our March walk is planned around Semerwater on Wednesday 23 March, and will be led by Phil Clarke. If you want to join us please contact me.

### **Wild Flower Group Walk Report by Kate Keen**

The first Wild Flower Group walk of the year is on Wednesday 9 February meeting at Cotherstone Village Hall at 2.00pm. On this walk around the edges of the village, we will be looking at trees and some ways to identify them in winter when there are no leaves.

Our second walk will be on Wednesday 13 April meeting at Egglestone Abbey at 2.00pm. Depending on how warm the Spring has been we should see lots of early flowers.

New members are always welcome, our walks are at a very slow pace as we are looking in detail at what is around us.

**Are you a soliloquist? The definitive landmark study  
by Annie Clouston**

My curiosity was aroused when a friend told me, apropos of nothing much, that he NEVER talks to himself. Of course I didn't believe him, and in return he didn't believe that I talk to myself all the time. From such beginnings came a project of enormous consequence to human kind. Who? How many? What about? I wanted to know. So I asked you, and decided that the somewhat piffling term 'self-talk' deserved grander terminology. I have coined the word 'soliloquisticism' to label the art and practice, and as such it should carry as many acronyms as necessary to give it the importance it deserves.

A few generalisations to be made about the research:

- 1) It cannot be objective
- 2) The absolute truth of respondents cannot be relied upon because some feel stigma in admitting to being a soliloquist
- 3) The latter are almost always male, and therefore their womenfolk report on them (and in so doing often omit to admit their own soliloquisticism)
- 4) Respondents to the research are much more likely to be female than male and view their soliloquisticism as entirely reasonable.

As befits a serious area of study, it is worthy of a plethora of acronyms related to the function of soliloquisticism, some of which I will develop with examples from responses.

- 1) STC/D (Self-talk via Cat or Dog) as in "God's sake Arthur, where did I leave my glasses?"
- 2) STR (Self-talk Remonstrance) as in "you stupid woman, why did you put a pint of milk in a half-pint jug?"
- 3) STTO (Self-talk Task Organisation) as in "when I get in I'm going to put the kettle on, feed Arthur, mop up the milk I spilt, have a cup of tea, then find my glasses"
- 4) STSC (Self-talk self congratulation) as in "I did a really good job, I'm going to give myself a pat on the back"
- 5) STFL (Self-talk Foul Language) I need not elaborate here except to note that this often is related to hammers and thumbs that got in the way
- 6) SYE (Self-yell exasperation) delivered at volume and often confused with STFL, as in "Where's my b\*\*\*\*\* phone?"
- 7) STLA (Self-talk living alone) see below
- 8) STM (Self-talk motivational) as in "just get on with it."

Here is a sample of your responses and their appropriate categorisation:

I frequently provide myself with a running commentary in my normal speaking voice (SSTO). I pretend i am speaking to the cats, even if they are not around. (STC/D)

Parts of myself talk amongst themselves (this defies categorisation within solilquisticism and requires a new label all to itself)

I tell myself off (STR) and talking aloud brings to mind things which might be forgotten (STTO)

I have talked to myself out loud and sang to myself out loud since a child.... but particularly interested in talking to my pets and plants (STC/D/P) ... no, I am not crazy and neither are you

I am male. Live with my wife (both in our 70's), and we BOTH talk to ourselves. Freely and openly. (She says she gets more sense from her private conversations than she does with me!) (STTO? STSC?)

I do talk to myself, but not all the time! I am usually encouraging myself to keep going (STM). I live alone but have a cat so I talk to him as well. He does reply sometimes! (STC/D)

I am afraid I become very loud on occasions such as Dominic's talk in the rose garden or during last week's PMQs - I am afraid I am not always polite on such occasions and have to try to be quieter if the window is open...(SYE)

Talk aloud more so since I have been widowed, got older and spent time in isolation because of Covid restrictions. The plus point is that no-one ever disagrees with me!! (STLA)

My curiosity is never satisfied, more questions surfaced as I read your answers, but thank you all. I think we can be reassured: Soliloquists are not crazy; quite the opposite, they keep themselves sane.

### **Freedom by Olive Runner (from National Poetry Day website)**

Give me the long, straight road before me,

\_\_A clear, cold day with a nipping air,

Tall, bare trees to run on beside me,

\_\_A heart that is light and free from care.

Then let me go! – I care not whither

\_\_My feet may lead, for my spirit shall be

Free as the brook that flows to the river,

\_\_Free as the river that flows to the sea.

### February March Quiz

1. What colour are the seats in the House of Commons?
2. What is the name of Wendy's dog in Peter Pan?
3. What is Queen Elizabeth II's surname?
4. What are the names of Harry Potter's parents?
5. Which sign of the Zodiac is represented by the Scales?
6. What is the name of the head teacher in Roald Dahl's *Matilda*?
7. What do you call a group of jellyfish?
8. What are the four Little Women sisters called?
9. Who sang *Unchained Melody*?
10. In which English county is the town of Stevenage?
11. Which is the only vowel not used as the first letter in a US State?
12. What is the largest bird of prey in the world?
13. What is the capital of Alaska?
14. Vanilla comes from what flowers?
15. Which country invented gin?
16. Which technique did Vincent van Gogh use to paint his 'Sunflowers'?
17. Which bird can fly backwards?
18. Which English city was once known as Duroliponte?
19. What does IPA stand for?
20. How many bones in the adult human body?

### Jan Feb Quiz Answers

1. Stonehenge
2. St Petersburg
3. Chionophobia
4. Around 3 miles per hour
5. "sun stands still"
6. Apple
7. Ptarmigan
8. Curling
9. An extremely cold, fast moving winter storm
10. A type of Eskimo boots
11. Mangetout
12. Hibernation

13. The tilt of the planet's axis is pointed away from the sun
14. Russian fur cap with ear flaps
15. None
16. Jamaica
17. March
18. Lerwick
19. Jan 6th
20. 20. Hans Christian Anderson

**A Spike of Green  
by Barbara Baker**

When I went out  
The sun was hot  
It shone upon  
My flower pot.

And there I saw  
A spike of green  
That no one else  
Had ever seen!

On other days  
The things I see  
Are mostly old  
Except for me.

But this green spike  
So new and small  
Had never yet  
Been seen at all!

Thank you to Karen Tranter for her quiz and this poem.

### Snowdrops by Rose Pude

Snowdrops usually appear in our gardens and woods from mid-January and are for me a sign that spring is on its way. The snowdrops found in gardens and in the wild are usually the *Galanthus nivalis* species. Many people think snowdrops are native to Britain but it was not until the 16<sup>th</sup> century that they were introduced into our gardens. The first records of them growing in the wild date back to the late 18th century. Since then they have become widespread, being found in broadleaved woods, along riverbanks, and in meadows. They do best in damp soils so the clay loams of Teesdale are ideal for them. In mid-winter there are few pollinating insects around but the flowers may be visited by bees and other insects on a warm day. The main way the clumps increase is by the bulbs dividing.

There are currently about 20 species of snowdrop grown in the UK but about 3,000 varieties derived from these are also cultivated. The species are native to woods and meadows in mainland Europe. The enormous number of variations is due to the increasing number of 'galanthophiles' – enthusiastic, some would say obsessive, collectors of snowdrop species and cultivars. In 2012, Thompson and Morgan paid £725 for one bulb of *Galanthus woronowii* Elizabeth Harrison (see photo). This is a unique and



striking variety with a golden yellow ovary and yellow petal markings. It was found in the garden of Elizabeth Harrison in Perthshire in 2002 by the Scottish nurseryman and snowdrop collector, Ian Christie. After several years of being multiplied using tissue culture, you can buy a bulb for a mere £50!

Snowdrops have long been associated with the Christian festival of Candlemas and were often used to decorate churches during the celebration that takes place on the 2<sup>nd</sup> February. Traditionally, snowdrops were used to treat headaches and as a painkiller. Today, a compound in the bulb has been used to develop a dementia treatment. Snowdrop bulbs are poisonous if eaten so don't try making your own headache remedy at home!

### **6,000 Trees - Planting the Future**

To mark the u3a movement's 40th Anniversary in 2022, the Trust are offering a chance to help create a u3a anniversary woodland situated in the beautiful Brecon Beacons. The target is to plant 5,000 trees through the planting season, October 2021 to March 2022.

Thanks to u3a members' support, 6,000 trees are being planted, an amazing number to reach in three months, especially as the original goal was just 5,000 trees.

The u3a is creating a new goal of 10,000 trees. Planting season ends this March and starts again in November 2022. If you would like to support the woodland, go to:

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/component/tags/tag/u3a-woodland>

### **Trees For Teesdale by Geoff King**

It has been estimated that, in the last 50 – 100 years, Teesdale has lost about 30% of its tree cover.

Trees die and fall, they are cut to use, and are not replaced, hedgerows grow old and are replaced by fences. Modern farming methods and manning levels do not allow for replanting trees and hedges.

There has been a group in Cotherstone trying to remedy this for many years, and in 2015, a few of us decided to try to emulate this in other Teesdale villages.

Trees for Teesdale was born with the object of forming, training, equipping, financing and supporting other Teesdale volunteer community groups to plant trees, wherever and for whoever wanted us to do so.



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We started with groups in Mickleton and Gainford, and this has now been extended to Boldron, Barningham and Barnard Castle. We have planted trees all across Teesdale from Newbiggin and Baldersdale to Piercebridge, Ingleton and Copley, and most places in-between.

The groups work independently and also jointly on projects, calling on helpers from other groups when needed. Last winter, we had 48 different people to help at various times.

We have received funding from a variety of sources over the years, from Durham County Council, several charitable foundations, companies such as GSK, and many private donations. When we started, all materials and tree saplings were purchased, but as tree planting has become fashionable, we have received many saplings free from the likes of The Woodland Trust and some of the energy companies.

Our plantings, always of native tree species, cover a wide range, from individual trees in stock protection cages, through small groups of trees in a protective fence, to larger groups and even whole small fields planted with trees to make woods. We have also planted several hundred metres of new hedgerow and infill to existing hedges.

It would be naïve to believe that planting a few thousand trees in Teesdale will make any difference to overall global warming, but if we can create and extend habitat and cover for birds and small (and large) mammals, and enhance the environment for the human population, then we will have achieved our goals.

Trees for Teesdale will always have room for more volunteers, to enjoy an outdoor occupation, meet new people and learn new skills, and would also appreciate new sites to plant in.

If you would like to help in either way, please get in touch through [www.treesforteesdale.org.uk](http://www.treesforteesdale.org.uk) where you will find contact details.

**County Durham Libraries wants your views** on what you need from your library. Whether you use your local library, access digital library services or currently do not use the libraries, they want to hear from you on how library services should be delivered in the future.

You can call Barnard Castle Library for assistance (Tel: 0300 0263409) or pick up a survey form from the library. You can find more information and contact details about the survey, and you can complete it online at:

<https://www.durham.gov.uk/article/25827/Durham-Libraries-For-You-get-involved>

The deadline for comments is 5.00pm on Friday 1 April 2022

### **Northern Dales Richard III Group Study Day**

Tickets are now on sale for a Study Day to be held in St Mary's Church, Barnard Castle on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> April. The day is hosted by the Northern Dales Richard III Group and is open to all members of the public. The day will consist of four talks -

Dr Pendlington. *Richard III and St Ninian: Spiritual or Political*

Lesley Lambert. *The identity of Perkin Warbeck* who claimed to be Richard Duke of York (the younger of Edward IV's sons).

Professor Richard Gameson. UK's leading expert on early medieval manuscripts and illumination. *The Pigments of Fifteenth-Century Illuminators*.

Annette Carson. *Six Months in 1483* – events and responses of Edward IV's death, the period of Edward V's reign, and Richard's accession to the throne.

Tickets £25 Full Time Education £20 (Additional £5 for buffet lunch).

**Contact: Kim Harding Tel: 01833 637018**

**Email: [kirklandergirl@googlemail.com](mailto:kirklandergirl@googlemail.com)**

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<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
Climate Solutions	1 <sup>st</sup> Thurs am	Kate Bailey 07867 683195
Discussion	2 <sup>nd</sup> Fri am	Glen Howard 01833 631639
Film Appreciation	4 <sup>th</sup> Tues pm	Judy Golds 01833 630809
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 & iPhone	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

<b>Group</b>	<b>Meeting Time</b>	<b>Contact details</b>
Photography	1 <sup>st</sup> Tues	Jane Mathieson 01388 710741
Poetry	2 <sup>nd</sup> Wed 10am	Annie Clouston 01833 637091
Science and Technology	2 <sup>nd</sup> Mon am	Roy Tranter 01833 638288
Scrabble	2 <sup>nd</sup> Mon pm	Lilian Smith 01833 650628
Spanish Conversation	3 <sup>rd</sup> Thurs 10am	Lusia McAnna 01833 638989
Table Tennis	Every Friday 3pm	Peter Singer 07508 663998
Theatre	Varies	Elizabeth Formstone 01325 374727
Travel/Day Trips		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 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> .
<b>Fri 25 Feb</b> 2.00pm	<b>MUSIC – Nick Cope Family Concert</b> Following the phenomenal success of his CBeebies show, Nick performs his unique songs for children with his guitar and animations.
<b>Sat 26 Feb</b> 7.30pm	<b>COMEDY – Shaparak Khorsandi: It Was The 90s! (14+)</b> From indie discos to unflattering crop tops...a trip down memory lane.
<b>Tues 1 Mar</b> 7.30pm	<b>COMEDY – Mark Thomas: Product (16+)</b> The comedian, presenter, political activist and reporter shows his favourite clips and explains what went on behind the scenes of his Channel 4 television show.
<b>Thurs 3 Mar</b> 7.30pm	<b>THEATRE – The Invisible Man (12+)</b> Northern Stage presents an electrifying new production, adapted from H.G. Wells science fiction classic.
<b>Fri 4 Mar</b> 7.30pm	<b>COMEDY – Andy Zaltzman: Satirist for Hire (14+)</b> Chair of <i>The News Quiz (Radio 4)</i> returns with his unparalleled interactive stand-up show.
<b>Sun 6 Mar</b> 2.00pm	<b>SUNDAY CLASSICS – A Woman’s Lot</b> Soprano, Penelope Randall-Davis, and pianist, Ingrid Sawers, mark this year’s International Women’s Day.
<b>Wed 9 Mar</b> 7.30pm	<b>SPOKEN WORD – John Pilkington: The Silk Road to Afghanistan</b> The award-winning adventurer follows a spectacular branch of the Silk Road.
<b>Fri 18 Mar</b> 7.30pm	<b>MUSIC – Wattyboys: St. Patrick’s Day Shenanigans</b> Join us to celebrate St Patrick’s day in style. With support act, Kirsty McLachlan, optional Irish supper and Ceilidh.
<b>Sat 19 Mar</b> 7.30pm	<b>MUSIC – John Otway and the Big Band Gig 5000 Tour</b> A cabaret act masquerading as a rock act. With support act, local singer-songwriter, Sam Nix.
<b>Fri 25 Mar</b> 8.00pm	<b>MUSIC – Heidi Talbot</b> Nominated Folk Singer of the Year and Best Traditional Song by BBC Radio 2, Heidi performs delicate re-workings of traditional and contemporary material.

[www.thewitham.org.uk](http://www.thewitham.org.uk)

**Box office: 01833 631107**