

TEESDALE u3a FORUM

Your monthly newsletter about interest groups and events in the Dale

SEPTEMBER 2022 no: 22/09

www.teesdaleu3a.org.uk

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u3a

Chairwoman's letter September 2022

Dear Friends

As we plunge all too soon into the season of mists and mellow fruitfulness the road ahead looks long, winding and not a little perilous. We need more than ever to look out for one another and develop coping strategies. It is my hope that you will see the u3a as a way of finding stimulation, distraction, companionship and above all, kindness, to get us through the tough months ahead. We do have some great events that will fit the bill. Next month's Singing in Harmony workshop for example. Those of you who sing will know of its joy-giving properties, which have been academically researched and verified. As you may recall the Workshop Group is currently collecting information from you about what would attract you, and we have had some excellent suggestions for our next programme. Keep them coming.

Whilst rekeying our Blue Plaque walk, Tim and I had a grand tour of the centre of Barnard Castle, and in the process of research, discovered fascinating details about our buildings and people. But we were also struck by what wasn't there – the uncelebrated and largely forgotten and the unexplained hidden gems around the town. There are so many people and places with stories to tell and the risk is that they will be lost to the generations to come. This is profoundly sad as the pace of life has rocketed us into spaces we could not have imagined fifty years ago. Do you sense a project coming on?

One of the buildings we found, tucked away, and not blue-plaques, had a stone-carved motto **MEMOR ESTO BREVIS Aevi** which translates as **be mindful of the shortness of life** and is usually followed by **CARPE DIEM – seize the day**. Rather than being a dire warning, I take it to be urging us to get on with the things (and the people) that make us feel good about ourselves.

As we go to print, I have heard the news of our dear Queen's death. For most of us, she has been the only monarch we have known. She has been a symbol of stability, an exemplar of unstinting public service and dedication and so the loss seems particularly sad and unsettling. Her true legacy will be found in passing on those values to King Charles III.

With very best wishes

Annie

Front cover photo: My garden on 6 September—a very cheering sight

It's *Your* Forum

Editors: Annie Clouston & Celia Chapple. This month's editor is Annie
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Both editors receive all contributions and share the email account:
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DEADLINE FOR CONTRIBUTIONS for the next edition:

Tuesday 11 October 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 u3a file in the library. 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 a cheque (£2 per copy payable to Teesdale u3a) 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.
- ◆ Email forumeditor@teesdaleu3a.org.uk or call Celia 07783 419067
- ◆ Collecting a **back copy** from the u3a file in the library or in The Witham shop or at TCR Hub.

NOTE TO CONTRIBUTORS

We are very grateful for all your contributions. Wherever possible, we will try as editors to include your work, and also urge you to be succinct. The more succinct you are the more photos, illustrations and interest articles and silliness we can include! Sincere apologies to anyone who feels they have been cut short or neglected.

Please limit submissions to 1 page or 400 words and 1 photo, and send them to the Forum Editor at:
forumeditor@teesdaleu3a.org.uk

MONTHLY MEETING AT THE WITHAM

Meetings assemble from 10.00am for a prompt start at 10.30am

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.

NEXT MEETINGS

- 27 October** Tim Meacham **Where There's Muck...**
24 November Gary Fildes **An introduction to Astronomy**
1 December **Christmas Bash**, The Coach House, Headlam Hall

Last month's talk by Val Scully: Gibside—a people's history

Gibside was built in 1620 by William Blakiston and was acquired by Sir William Bowes of Streatlam Castle in 1693 when he married Elizabeth Blakiston, reputed to be the richest heiress in the country. Sir William's son, George Bowes, inherited the estate in 1722 and created the famous landscape garden, including the wonderful chapel designed by William Paine and the statue to British Liberty, once covered in gold leaf. Built on the profits from coal, the Gibside estate became one of the most wealthy estates in the country. John Bowes, 10th Earl of Strathmore, inherited the property in 1786 and after that date the house fell into decline, until it was abandoned in 1920. Items from the Hall were transferred to Glamis Castle in Scotland. John Bowes, who built the Bowes Museum, was the son of the 10th Earl.

Val Scully leads a voluntary research group on the history of the Hall and particularly the families of those ordinary folk who have been associated with it over many generations. Helen McFarlane had begun the research using an early census. Val informed members of Teesdale u3a about some of the findings of the research. The families identified included the Renwicks, the Cheesemans (3 generations), the McQueens, the Woodmans and many others. Painstaking work has traced family trees and so far 350 names had been identified and the numbers were still increasing. Photographs, postcards and letters had been unearthed and Val displayed some of these. The photographs identified many people who have since been traced but also showed useful features of the estate which helped indicate what and where they were. Jack Cowan had been the last gamekeeper and the Butterwells were farmers and ran a sawmill. There was a photograph of the annual pageant with elaborate coach and four horses. Several pictures of royalty included a 1936 photo showing the Queen Mother. The Bowes Museum retains the link with the Bowes-Lyon family.

It is sad that such a magnificent estate is a shell of its former self, although now in the trusteeship of the National Trust, it is still well worth visiting. This was a very comprehensive talk, full of fascinating detail. The vote of thanks was given by **Ian Reid, and our thanks to Ian, who wrote this report.**

Weekend Workshop Programme

Please note that the workshop programme for the new year is being scheduled. There is still time for you to give us your ideas, which are most welcome. If you have not filled in the recent questionnaire we would still like to hear from you at:

forumeditor@teesdaleu3a.org.uk or by phone 01833 637091

1 October 2-4 pm *Singing in Harmony* led by Annette Lowson the Director of the Community Choir and Orchestra. At Guide HQ, Birch Road. Cost £5. Contact Hazel to book a place: Tel. 01833 638710;

hazelyeadon@hotmail.com

5 November 10-12am *Calligraphy* led by Tony Craig. At Guide HQ Birch Road. Cost £6. Contact Hazel to book a place (details above)

3 December 11-2pm *Vegetarian Cooking for Christmas* led by Annie Clouston. We will prepare and eat alternatives to meat for festive food. Glass of wine included. Cost £10. To book a place contact Sue Overton 01833 908597 sueoverton@hotmail.com

Be A Guest Editor

Would you like to try your hand at editing the Forum? As a Guest Editor, you will assist the Forum Editor to assemble a booklet online, make decisions about what to include, write fill-in pieces, and prepare and organise the printing of a hard copy.

Please contact Annie and Celia if you are interested. Telephone numbers on page 3.

Email: forumeditor@teesdaleu3a.org.uk

Theatre By The Lake: *The Borrowers* 10 December 2022

To all who have booked this theatre trip, a payment of £36 per person is now required. Could you please make cheques out to Teesdale u3a and send to me, Diana Marks, at 5 Green Lane, Barnard Castle, DL12 8LE. Many thanks, Diana. More details about the trip are at:

<https://teesdaleu3a.org.uk/news/the-borrowers-theatre-by-the-lake-10-december-2022/>

Group Reports

Art Appreciation Report by Roger Stanyon

Call for new convenor

I am trying to restart the Art Appreciation Group, which I ran for 12 years. I no longer want to run meetings, but I have lots of DVDs on art and artists which could be used. We also used to have two or three trips a year to galleries where there were interesting exhibitions. If you feel able to co-ordinate this group, for which I am happy to give advice, please contact me on 01833 631758 or rogerwstanyon@gmail.com

u3a Birdwatching Group

Report by Andrew Lapworth

Summer is a quieter time in the birding calendar, after Spring's busy breeding activities, and it is also a time when many birdwatchers are on their holidays and travels. For these reasons the group did not have anything planned for July and August, but we resume our field meetings in September.

Here in Barnard Castle it's been wonderful to watch the comings and goings of our local Swifts. We are fortunate to still have them in good numbers in various spots across the town. As I write, most of our Swifts have now left for their wintering grounds in Africa.

Similarly, we still have some House Martins nesting under suitable eaves across the town; some have raised second broods and they are now on the wing and gathering in small flocks on telephone wires.



They too will be gone before very long. *A Swift leaving its nest in Thorgate*

Autumn and Winter sees our summer migrants leaving, and passage and wintering birds arriving. Attention therefore now turns to wetland and coastal sites, and our next series of field meetings will be to:

19 September Nosterfield Nature Reserve, near Ripon. Managed and run by the Lower Ure Conservation Trust. This is a great wetland reserve for seeing ducks, geese, waders and raptors. This year it has occasionally been visited by Yorkshire's first breeding Ospreys (although they are likely to have left when we visit).

17 October - Low Barns: one of Durham Wildlife Trusts flagship reserves at Witton-le-Wear, and a lovely wetland, with hides and a cafe. re-

21 November— Hauxley: one of the best wildlife-watching spots in the North East and right next to the coast in Druridge Bay. A Northumberland Wildlife Trust Reserve, with a Visitor Centre and a really good cafe.

Details for each meeting will be emailed to group members in the usual way. If you would like to join our group please contact me:

andrew_lapworth@hotmail.com

Room to Read Book Group Report by Sue Neill
***Amy and Isabelle* by Elizabeth Strout**

Elizabeth Strout is a Pulitzer prize-winning American writer based in Maine, and this is the first of her novels, published in 1998. The book did not win universal praise from the members of our group, but all of us agreed to some degree with Hilary Mantel that Strout has 'an attention to reality so exact that it goes beyond a skill and becomes a virtue'.

Amy and Isabelle are a mother and daughter, bound inescapably together both by their living conditions, in so much that they live alone in a house with no immediate neighbours, and by their toxic yet mutually dependent love/hate relationship. Isabelle is significantly emotionally repressed, and Amy has been unable to elicit any genuine warmth from her mother for her entire life. This in no small way contributes to her behaviour as a teenager. Strout specialises in getting inside the heads of her characters and in this book she elicits sympathy and dislike from her readers for a number of principal players, although the men in the story are explored to a much lesser degree. At times Isabelle is not just distant from her daughter but feels real antipathy and jealousy towards her, and it is not until nearly the end of the book that we find out what events in her past have contributed to her state of mind and the self disgust from which she suffers. At this point there appears a glimmer of hope for Amy and Isabelle's future relationship.

Our group members varied hugely in their liking of the book, and some felt that it was too negative and overly focussed on people who were hugely disappointed with their lives, whilst others loved it. Overall, we gave it around 4 out of 5 for recommending to another book group, and just under 4 for recommending to a friend.

Next book: 19 October ***Let the Great World Spin*** by Colum McCann

Discussion Group August Report by Glen Howard

We didn't have a proper meeting this month, but enjoyed meeting up for a general chat over a cuppa.

Our next meeting will be on Friday 9th September, 10.15am at *Andalucia*. We have chosen the topic - ***Should we re-nationalise the Utility Companies??*** If you would like to join us please give me a ring.

Gardening Group Report by Pauline Fawcett

We were blessed with a warm dry sunny day for our penultimate visit for 2022 (yes, we have another one planned). Breezy Knees, described by Monty Don as “a beautiful modern garden created on the grandest scale” and I have to say I agree with Monty.

Many people asked where the name came from, and as explained, a very exposed site with few trees, no effective hedges, standing there in the middle of January, no need to ask the question. The 20 acre site began in 1999, planting a framework of trees and shrubs and as these became established work started on the extensive borders giving a succession of flowers through the summer. Further seasonal highlights have been created, - May, June and September gardens, an annual meadow, a rose garden, a cottage garden, the list goes on. There is a fountain, a lake and arboretum, a pond and shade garden, even a Stonehenge – clipped box to resemble Stonehenge. To say it is a riot of colour is not doing justice to the gardens; every turn in the path brought a new vista. I am sure that everyone found one area that was especially pleasing and took something from it to try in their own plot.

Adjoining the garden is their own nursey selling perennial plants which can be seen growing in the garden, and as they say the plants have been tested by whatever the Yorkshire weather throws at them - have they been to Teesdale? Unfortunately as it is almost the end of their season the nursey was a little depleted, even more so after our visit, as many plants made their way back to Barnard Castle.

Several people commented that it would be nice to return at a different time of year, perhaps our new convenors would consider this another time?

Indoor Meetings at Stainton Village Hall, 1.45 pm

7th October Jill Cunningham, Bugs and Beasties

4th November Dianne Nichol-Brown, Edible flowers and teas, samples will be available.

2nd December A visit to Nunnington Hall, ‘Christmas Through the Ages – step back in time to see Nunnington dressed as ***Christmas from the past***. Times and prices to follow.

Genealogy Group - September Report by Alan Swindale

Sixteen members of the joint Teesdale and Bishop Auckland Genealogy Group met in person at Enterprise House. The topic was *Civil Registration of Births Marriages and Deaths*.

Civil registration commenced on the 1st July 1837 in England and Wales but not until 1st January 1855 for Scotland and 1st January 1864 for Ireland. The talk discussed how these records can help the family historian and where they can be found.

A 'certificated copy' of the entry in the birth, marriage or death register - normally called the birth certificate etc - provides the most information; names, exact date and place of the event and more. The 'certificate' is only available from either the local Registrar's office or from the General Registry Office (GRO), but the index to the registers is readily available online from FreeBMD, FamilySearch, as well as paid-for sites such as Ancestry, FindMyPast etc. The index information is very useful in its own right since it gives the name, approximate date and location of the event and some additional information. A free index to the births and deaths is also available online from the GRO which provides the additional information of age at death for deaths and the mother's maiden name for births. The main index only provides this information from 1866 and 1912 respectively.

In October the topic will be *Parish records of Baptisms, Marriages and Deaths*. The meeting will be in person at 2pm on **Wednesday October 5th** in the Dales Room at Enterprise House, Harmire Estate, Barnard Castle. (Our meeting room is not available on Thursday). A one hour tutorial will be followed by a one hour practical session. Our meetings will revert to the first Thursday of the month for November and December.

Alan Swindale ajs@fivenine.co.uk 01388488348 .

Geography Group August Meeting at Blencathra Field Studies Centre by Gerald Blake, Group Convenor

A minibus load of geographers visited the Blencathra Field Studies Centre in Cumbria on 18 August, and enjoyed a fabulous day out. The staff had been asked to show us what field activities might be experienced by school groups visiting the FSC. Our tutor, Katy Boreham, briefed us on the work of the FSC in 17 centres in the UK and what courses are run. We were greatly impressed by what modern school geographers tackle. The practical skills they acquire are invaluable, but more importantly these invariably raise big questions about how best to manage the environment. Significantly, there has been a big increase in students wishing to study geography at university because of concerns about global warming.

We measured the rates of rainfall runoff from three contrasting types of land surface, with heavy vegetation, light vegetation, and no vegetation as in urban environments. The results sparked discussion about water infiltration, and flooding in towns. Next, we were introduced to measuring carbon storage in trees; in vegetation it is roughly 50% of total biomass, so to measure carbon in trees the biomass of its roots, stem, and crown needs to be calculated. Pupils learn how to measure the height and circumference of trees, and using conversion charts, they calculate total biomass in tonnes for particular trees. This naturally led to debate about the merits of deciduous versus evergreen trees in reforestation schemes.

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Measuring the speed of river flow is an old favourite of geography teachers, but perhaps less so for their pupils who often get their feet wet. Our introduction to river flow was fortunately a very small rivulet so we remained dry, but much fun was had with hydro-prop and stop watch. Some became so enthusiastic that our tutor had to remind us that it was not a competition!

Finally we went back indoors to work on laptops to learn how GCSE pupils handle Geographical Information Systems (specifically ArcGIS) to download data to make maps. Our data concerned the location and orientation of drumlins in north Yorkshire which we had to turn into maps. With the assistance of our long-suffering tutor, we all managed to create amazing maps on our screens, but not before one group (including a former professor of geography) had pointed all their drumlins in the wrong direction.

Richard Peasland and Katy Boreham, senior staff at the FSC, had organised an eye opening visit for us, well-tuned to the needs of the 'oldest' group they could recall hosting. We lunched at the ancient Horse and Farrier in Threlkeld where the food was superb and the portions mountainous. Gerald noted that future risk assessments for this trip must mention overeating at the Threlkeld pub.

October meeting: Thursday 20 October at 2.00pm in The Witham:



Jonathan Mitchell (Foreign Office) will speak on *The geopolitical setting of the growing tensions in Southeast Europe.*

Geology Group September 2022 to February 2023 Programme

We will meet at The Witham on the last Monday of the month until November. From December to February, we will be meeting virtually on Zoom twice a month.

The dates are as follows:

Monday at **The Witham** 10.00 to 12.00 – 26/09; 24/10; 28/11

Monday - General Meeting - **ZOOM** 10.30 to 11.30 am – 19/12; 23/01/2023; 27/02/2023

09/01 - Monday - General Meeting - **ZOOM** 2.30 to 3.30 pm – 9/01/2023; 13/02/2023

After that, meetings and field trips will be held face to face between March and July inclusive on the 4th Monday of the month.

iPad& iPhone Group Report by Mike Sweeting

After a small amount of housekeeping – updating to protect against a security issue and looking at how to download Apple's own manuals for the iPad and iPhone – we went on to look at the benefits and options made available by using iCloud.

One of the benefits of iCloud is that it makes it a lot easier to use the Files app which was our next topic. Files allows users to organise documents, letters, pictures, etc. into a formal structure of locations and folders. We looked at the similarities between Files and similar versions, Finder on Apple desktops and laptops, and File Explorer on Windows. We also looked at how folders and files could be arranged to make sure the information could be found again in the future. Our information could also be made more secure as we can synchronise documents between our iPad/iPhone and our space in iCloud as well as making it available on any other Apple devices we have.

Last month we looked at how to use the Cameras in our devices. This month we moved on to look at the complementary app - Photos. Photos can use iCloud to back up pictures and save space on your device. It can also arrange your pictures into different groupings such as 'Places', 'People', videos, panoramas, etc. Users can also create their own Albums of, say, holidays, relatives, hobbies, etc. We then moved on to looking at how pictures could be enhanced in many ways with the changes being visible on screen as they are made.

The next meeting of the group will be on 23 September 2022 at 2:00pm in The Witham.

Please contact me through the email link on the Group page on the web site if you would like to join the Group or have any queries.

Lunch Group Report by Jan Fowler

On Wednesday 17th August, eight of us met at *The Rose And Crown* in Romaldkirk for lunch. We all really enjoyed our meals, they were delicious and the portion sizes were just right. The restaurant, unsurprisingly, appeared to be fully booked and we would thoroughly recommend it.

Needlecraft Group Report by Glen Howard

The year seems to be flying by and we are all working hard on our various projects (and occasionally having to take things back!) Whilst working we chat about all sorts of topics and this month we talked about the books we have enjoyed, or not, the words you can no longer use because their meaning has changed, and gluing yourself to roads and speakers' chairs. None of us were keen to attempt the latter.

Our next meeting will be on Monday 3rd October. Please get in touch with me if you would like to join us.

Glen Howard 01833 631639

Painting Group Report by Val Hobbs

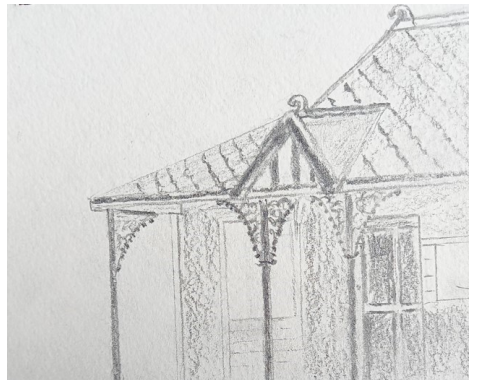
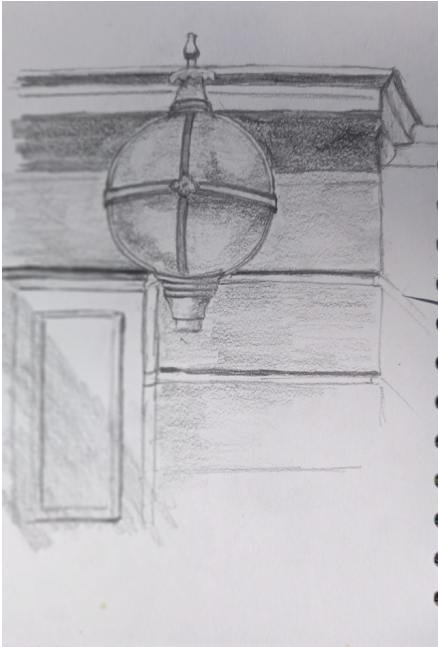
On Friday, 13th August, we all met at the Bowes Museum. The day couldn't have been more perfect....wall to wall sun and azure blue skies and not the slightest hint of a breeze! (Even at 10 am, the temperature was hitting the 20s.)

We excitedly met several newcomers all arriving to 'test the waters', and Anne briefed us under the cool shade of a tree. Our task for the day was focusing on the architecture using the vanishing point to achieve dimension, so, armed with deckchairs, sketch pads, pencils and a handout on how to use the vanishing point, we each trotted round the grounds to find our own niche.

The sun beat down and the temperature rose to almost uncomfortable heights, so most of us retreated into the dappled shade of the plenteous trees. Some of us opted to attempt minor detail, whilst others went for the more difficult, larger sections of the museum.

Achieving dimension using the vanishing point is not as easy as it might seem, but on regrouping for the end-of-session chat, It was evident that we'd all managed to make muster! It was a fantastic day...and another steep learning curve!

The next meeting will take place on Friday, September 9, starting at 10am. I could be lady of the outdoor meetings but I will let all members know beforehand.



Photography Group Notices from Jane Mathieson

Forthcoming Meetings

4th October Thorpe Perrow, if the trees have their autumn colour.

New members always welcome.

Please note: Orders being taken for our Photography Group calendar, 2023 *Bridges of Teesdale*

August Poetry Group Report by Annie Clouston

This month we were very happy to welcome Meg Peacocke to read and discuss her poetry with the group. It was a unique opportunity to probe into what inspires poems, the process of writing, choice of language and form, revision, forgetting, moving on.

Meg has published a number of volumes of poetry, reflective of her memories of a rural childhood, and life's challenges and inevitably mortality itself. She was very kind in reading one of my favourite poems of hers, *In Praise of Aunts*, though the poetry file available from this meeting does not include this exceptionally poignant poem. The poem illustrates Meg's humour and ability to connect to human experience.

And now for something completely different – the world according to goose – which does make sense if you put yourself in the web-feet of a farmyard goose musing upon its relationship with homo sapiens (ogre):

Goose Hymn by Meg Peacocke

We lub us ogre
It like we two legi
two blue eye
it dict us born

It warm us dict us lib
look us lub feed us
goin out comin in
Mind it mangly boot

It go unwingly
Lub it corni corni copya
Mind it strangly finger
it strongly anger

It frighten we
It mighty mighty always
It might alway
might dict us die

The theme for our next meeting is Scottish Poetry. Files of our poetry choices can be acquired by emailing me annie@cloustons.uk

At the Records Office
A poem by Meg Peacocke

Here is the document. Note the style
the formal print untouched by tongue,
words that couldn't be spoken
impromptu, devised as they are
to avoid any local colour:

anger, disappointment, pleasure, fear,
love -especially love – stripped out.
Nothing is kept on record
of this person other than Born,
Owned, Owed, Died. Now he is Archived Man,

Two-dimensional, to be handed
Over a desk. Better that way.
If he'd had a chance to speak
He might have come up with something
Inappropriate, being given

to questionable jokes, blasphemy
even, wrong company, wrong room.
He's packaged now, a second
Jeremy Bentham, husk well stuffed
with the whims of memory. You're safe:

sure that your voice won't suddenly break
and totter an octave too high
as abruptly you miss the chap.
Rhythms of official language,
plus time, will preserve you from all that.

You can play him through, interpreting
like a maestro. Yours, the sole rights.
Yours to edit out the coughs
and muttering as he observed
his cabbages or the skirts of girls.

Scrabble Group Report by Ray Thompson

September's group met on Monday 5th at Lillian's house; there were five of us, a few regulars were away on holiday. We split into two groups, three and two, for the first two games.

Ray and Kate won the first games with Kate getting an excellent score of 364. These two then played against each other whilst the remaining three played their game. Kate won her game with a brilliant score of 491 getting three 7 letter words. Lillian won the other group game with a score of 249.

Thanks to Lillian for the tasty selection of home-made cakes and tea at her lovely home.

We are now meeting on the first Monday of each month. The next Scrabble group meet is on Monday 3rd October.



Table Tennis Group Report by Peter Singer

Table tennis, like life, can be frustrating and incomprehensible at times. The elegant top-spin forehand that one seemed at last to have mastered one week will suddenly and inexplicably disappear the next, with the same shot sending the ball flying over the end of the table. How did the subtly-crafted serve that bamboozled everyone last week manage only to plop repeatedly into the net or miss the side of the table by a country mile this week? Such questions can become existential and seem to have no answer (although maybe some practice might help), but we manage to shake them off (at least most of the time) and carry on enjoying our play, enthusiasm and dogged determination overcoming self-doubt. As Alexander Pope observed, "Hope springs eternal in the human breast" and oh, the joy when that shot comes right again!

Perhaps continuing our look at the basic skills would be a good idea? Having adopted the 'ready position' and the correct grip of the racket, the next skill is the racket angle. If the hitting surface of the racket is angled downwards ('closed' position), it is used to play a top-spin or block stroke and if it is angled upwards ('open' position), it is used to play a back-spin or push stroke. If the ball comes to you short over the net, you would normally use a backhand or forehand push (racket angled upwards) to return the ball with slight back-spin, also keeping it short over the net and preventing your opponent from playing an attacking stroke. It is worth finding someone to practise just this shot repeatedly, until it becomes second nature, before progressing to more advanced shots. The golden rule is, unlike in cricket, never play with a straight bat.

After the Commonwealth Games, we have had the European Championships, and watching the table tennis has again proved exciting and awe-inspiring. Games often start quite slowly, with cautious 'push' shots on both sides, suddenly accelerating into full-on attack, with both players some way back from the table and giving the ball wellie on both flanks, showing astonishing speed of reaction. The men's title went to Dan Qiu, a German player of Chinese heritage, who uses the penhold grip. The women's European Champion is Sofia Polcanova of Austria, although her opponent had to retire after two games. The British player, Liam Pitchford, lost 4-2 to a Portuguese player in the last 32.

If you would like to join our group to learn the game, improve your skills or just have a bit of fun, please contact Peter Singer

(pandjsinger@btinternet.com 07508 663998).

All are welcome, whether you have never played before or have not played for some time.

7 – 9 mile Walking Group – August Report by Peter Singer (with photograph by James Dykes)

Our thirteen-strong group set out on an almost perfect day for a bracing walk over Barningham Moor. We started in the village itself, the name of which is of Saxon origin, meaning "village of Beorn's people", with its delightful mix of 17th and 18th century houses, stone well dated 1866, Primitive Methodist Chapel of 1815, and traditional green telephone box, creatively decorated inside for a day out at the beach (as recently featured in the Teesdale Mercury). Crossing the cattle-grid at the top of the village (and being re-joined by Jenny, who had craftily cadged a lift up the hill) we had a steep but short climb up to the brow of the moor and then struck out on a fine, straight path, with glorious views across the dale. Visibility was good and we could see as far as Mickle Fell in the distance, whilst the sharpest-eyed could make out the Bowes Museum and Bowes Castle way below us. We were also treated throughout the walk to a purple sea of heather in full bloom, mostly ling and bell heather, often beautifully mixed in with the green and red of bilberry leaves.

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Continued from the previous page

Passing a somewhat dilapidated railway carriage, possibly used in the past by shooters and/or sheep, we continued west to cross the Badger Way, the name of which has nothing to do with furry, black and white, nocturnal creatures. It was originally a trading route used by pedlars or traders, carrying mostly corn from larger to smaller markets and local communities. They were licensed and given a badge to prove that they were authorised to trade. A little further on, we encountered the Badger Way Stoop, a large and heavy, triangular-shaped column inscribed with its name and one of a number of such columns found here and on other moors in the Pennines. They were erected in the early 18th century as waymarks or boundary stones and were the responsibility of local Justices of the Peace.

Continuing on a pleasant plod, we reached the summit of the walk at How Tallon (1,466 feet), marked by a trig point and a recumbent boundary stone. This is a Bronze Age tumulus or burial cairn, although we have no idea who was buried there or why – it's certainly a long way from anywhere. There is also reputedly a stone circle at How Tallon, thirteen metres in diameter and comprising seven blocks of eroded sandstone, although most of them have either subsided or been weathered away, so they are extremely difficult to locate. We didn't really have the time or patience to track them down, but pictures are available on www.stone-circle.org.uk/stone/barninghamcircle.

After a short coffee-break and a short stretch ahead, we doubled back to the right along a clear track heading across the moor, passing a number of limestone shakeholes and bringing us to the head of Osmaril Gill, where we stopped for lunch, spreading ourselves out on the conveniently provided boulders and stones, with a wonderful view down to Wash Beck and a small lake on the lower moor. We were accompanied by three Red Kite, wheeling around in search of their own lunch (we were too large to tempt them, or at least that's what we hoped) and lots of dapper Wheatear flitting about amongst the rocks. From there, the path led us past Eel Hill and onto a descent towards Black Hill Gate at the edge of the Stang Forest, although we didn't go through it and instead struck back across the moor, still with lovely views, down to a wall corner and on to Haythwaite Farm.

The return to Barningham was along a quiet moor road, cutting down past Bragg House to a walled, green way and then along Low Lane, an inviting track that took us past a well-preserved limekiln, across two stiles and a field edge, ending back in the middle of the village near our parked cars. It had been an enjoyable day and the only disappointment was that Coghlan's Tea Rooms was full, so refreshment remained a wistful dream. Lesson of the day – book a table in advance if you want to be sure of your tea and cakes!

On Wednesday October 19 our walk will be led by Pete. A postponed walk from earlier in the year. A 7.5 miles walk starting at Broom Park and includes the old Deerness Railway, Ushaw College and the old Lanchester railway. Contact Nicky Grace nickygrace729@gmail.com

Fell-Walking Group Report by Jenny Selley, photos by J Coleman

Wednesday 24th August A Taste of the Lakes

Who would have thought that marmalade ice cream could taste so good? I kid you not, but more of that later. First, 8 of us met in Stainton, just SW of Penrith to start a 10.5 mile walk. Well, that's what the leaders said (and still do) but then, they would say that, wouldn't they?

We began by walking to the east over a few fields and past the Lakes Free-range Hen farm – all hens in deepest hiding. We then crossed the busy main road down to Ullswater without losing anyone so we could walk along the River Eamont. Pretty and pleasant but a walk through woodland too, a steep bank with lots of wet rocks and gnarly tree roots to trap the unwary walker and send them down into the river below. Sounds dramatic? Well, maybe I'm selling it a bit hard, but only a bit. Out to the attractive little village of Sockbridge and touching Quaker Lane, we came out to another road. In times gone by we've had to walk the 500 metres along the road but some sensible authority has put in a pavement – very helpful and perhaps a sign of how many people are walking this route nowadays.

We resisted the allure of the 12th century church at Barton – it was a bit off route. Off up through fields to a coffee stop with lots of flat rocks on a slope with good views.



Continued overleaf...

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The early low cloud over the Pennines and Lakeland hills was lifting and we began to get the good views that characterised the rest of the walk. More climbing up to Celleron and Winder Hall and then up onto the moor above Ullswater. The climbing was rewarded with views of Cross Fell and the Dunfells behind us and possibly the best view anywhere of Ullswater, the whole length of it. It really is stunning and we were so blessed with the weather. We then dropped abruptly down to Pooley Bridge, stopping just above for lunch with a view.

Normally we would expect tea and cake in Pooley Bridge but it was agreed it was too soon after lunch So we continued up and around Dunmallard Hill and then up (again!) to Dacre where one of our group took us on a worthwhile diversion to the church yard to see the Dacre Bears. Four statues which have been dated as pre-Saxon and are really quite extraordinary. No-one really knows their original purpose. Four bears all hugging posts, possibly a story of some animal landing on the top of the bear and duly being dispatched by a quite satisfied-looking 'bear' that looks



more like a lion.

The walk then returned to a track past Dacre Castle which looks like one of those fortified houses designed to resist the advances of the Scots or other invaders. Very impressive. The track then took us to Dalemain which is famous for an annual marmalade festival – aha! The marmalade ice cream!

That was only part of the attractions of a very well supplied tea room and we took leisurely refreshment before the last half hour back into Stainton. Very well timed because that last little stretch has a sting in the tail in the form of an unreasonably steep bank up through woodland, but we all triumphed and we all agreed it was a delightful walk.

Next walk: Wednesday 28 September—A walk in Swaledale with wonderful views—from Surrender Bridge (circular). Led by John Peat.

Weekend Workshop Report by Hazel Yeadon Drystone Walling, August 2022



The August Workshop was Drystone Walling. On one of the hottest days of the year, having amended the Risk Assessment to include ‘Exposure to the sun’, we met at the designated gate at Kinninvie and were led across a field to where Adam Staley was already expertly re-doing a wall (he has thousands of metres of wall waiting for his expert work). After a short introduction and realising (well me, anyway) that the walls stay standing due to the fact that the base is much wider than the top, it was ‘hands on’. Everyone set to work clearing the base of existing stones or trying to find the perfect stone to fit where the wall was already part built. Some worked away all the morning, whilst others felt the need for a few breaks and lots of chatting ensued. As we walked back across the field, dusty and tired, all agreed it had been a good morning, with one person saying “It was the best fiver I have spent in ages!”

Blue Plaques Walk Saturday 3 September



Report by Annie Clouston, photos by Ian Royston

Seventeen members joined Tim and I for a circuit of the town's blue plaques – of which there are, officially, twenty-one. The morning was muggy and within 15 minutes there was a sudden belter of a rainstorm from which we took shelter in a convenient archway by the site of Broadgates Methodist Chapel - opened in 1765 with a sermon by John Wesley. Fortunately the rain stopped as suddenly as it began and we carried on down to Thorngate and then up the Bank onto Horsemarket and on up to Galgate. The official blue plaques are all listed in a booklet that is on sale at The Witham; that booklet is light on detail and Tim and I think it could do with a re-vamp – as could the blue plaques themselves.

The Blue Plaque scheme was launched by English Heritage and is London focused. Other towns and cities have devised their own schemes determined by their local councils. Thus it is Barnard Castle Council that has decided who or what should be memorialised by a plaque. Its criteria in choosing is unclear.

What is immediately apparent is that there are questions to be asked about this. For example: why are there no women featured (except for a passing reference to Mrs Elizabeth Hutchinson because her initial is featured, along with her husband William, on the weathervane at 57 Galgate)?; why does

James 2 rather than James II feature on the plaque at Blagraves, where incidentally the house is dated wrongly?; why is Edward Nixon honoured with a plaque at Galgate, yet not the equally philanthropic Dr Munro (who lived where the Post Office is now)? and why is there no plaque locating the cholera memorial (in St Mary's Churchyard) to recognise the importance of the efforts to bring clean water to the residents of Barnard Castle – too late for the 143 towns people who died in 1849?

It would be good to hear from any of you who have suggestions or information in relation to the Blue Plaque scheme. We all learned something from the tour, but it did set hares running about what wasn't to be found, as well as what was.



Wildflower Group August Report by Kate Keen

Due to the forecast of intense heat, the scheduled August walk at Smardale Gill was cancelled.

The second scheduled walk from Bowlees Visitor Centre did take place. With all the unusually hot and dry weather in August, I feared that we may not see many plants still in flower. 14 of us met at the Visitor Centre. Initially we walked up to the quarry area where we were rewarded with the sight of Autumn Gentians in flower. After that, we crossed over Wynch Bridge, seeing shrubby cinquefoil clinging to the cliff. We turned right past the bridge and spotted saw-wort. These 3 flowers were the first ever sightings for many of us. Another unusual sight was sea plantain growing next to the river; it is normally found on the coast. We returned to Bowlees Visitor Centre for well needed refreshments. In total we saw 57 plants on the day.



Saw –wort

Shrubby Cinquefoil

The final walk of the year will take place on Wednesday 14th September meeting at the Desmesnes and taking a circular route along the Tees, over Abbey Bridge and back along the river.

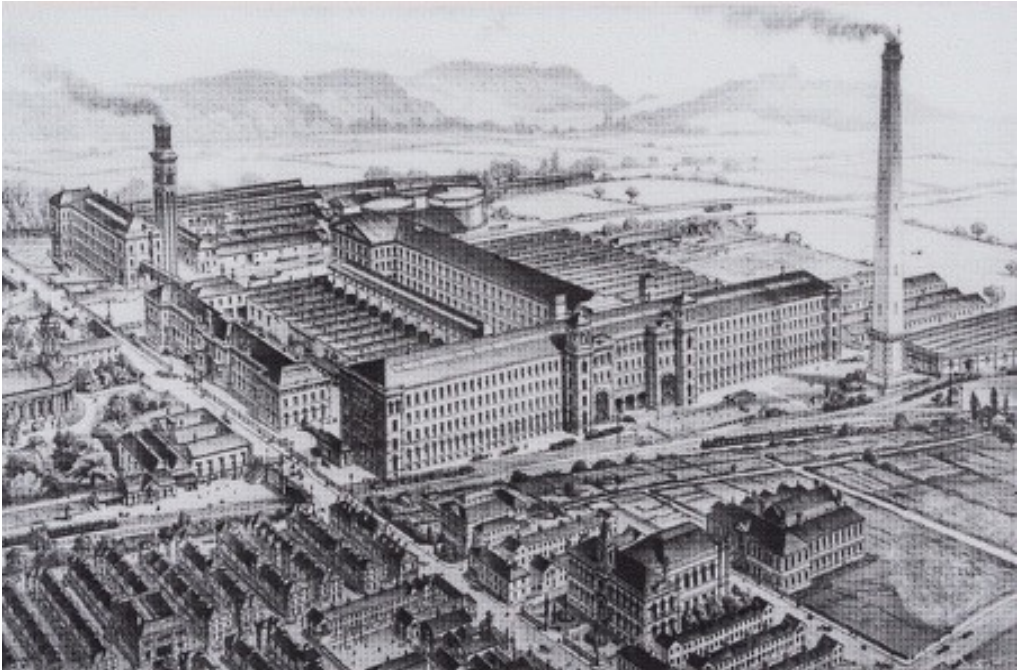


Autumn Gentian

u3a Visit to Saltaire (19/08/2022)

At the crack of dawn on Galgate, well 8.45am, one of Maude's larger coaches was full of eager u3a members full of anticipation for the trip to the World Heritage Site at Saltaire.

Sir Titus Salt, a Victorian of vision, built a mill in 1851 by the side of the river Aire (Salt + Aire = Saltaire). At the time, it was the largest industrial factory in the world, allegedly. Sir Titus's idea was to bring all the separate processes of the worsted textile trade under one roof, which obviously meant it had to be big; it is.



Unusual at the time, Sir Titus was an industrialist of enlightened self-interest, a humanitarian. Realising that happy, healthy, and well-fed workers produced more cloth than sad, sick, and hungry ones, Salt built a community village next to the mill in which he housed workers and support staff. Each dwelling had fresh water, sanitation (privy out back) and a gas supply. The village had its own shops, hospital, school library, park and church. So strong were his humanitarian instincts, Sir Titus saw fit to reduce the working day to a mere 10 hours. Also, appreciating that drunk and difficult workers produced less cloth, public houses in the village were banned, and unions forbidden. For most though, the benefits of improved lifestyle outweighed the cost of such privations.

Upon arrival, our u3a members were split into two subgroups and taken round the village by two very pleasant and knowledgeable ladies in period dress.

Here is one of the sub-groups delicately posed (well the guide is) in front of the recently renovated chapel whose original concern was, I'm sure, the moral rectitude of the mill workers.



The tour guides elaborated on much of the above information but also from a personal perspective derived from the history of individual workers, doctors, nurses and managers.

Following the village tours we were all set free to have lunch in the mill café, explore the up-market shops, and appreciate the art displays that are now housed in the main Saltaire Mill. An artwork of note was an enormous painting of the seasons in Normandie, by David Hockney. It can't have been much less than 100 yards long.....all done on his iPad, then enlarged, obviously. There's a note saying he uses an iPad now because it's faster than water colours, which I guess is important when you're getting old.

At 4.30 prompt, we all packed back into Maude's bus and headed back to Galgate, a worthwhile and enjoyable trip, well worth the effort. Special thanks to Jane Matheison for her unstinting organisational skills that facilitated the trip's smooth running.

September October Quiz
'A penny for your thoughts'
Pre-decimal money

1. How many pennies to the pound?
2. What was the origin of the symbol 'd' for the penny?
3. How much was a florin worth?
4. What was the value of the 'tanner'?
5. What bird was depicted on the farthing?
6. How much was a farthing worth?
7. What metal was a 'groat' made of?
8. How much was a 'groat' worth?
9. In 1947 the metal content of all British silver coins was changed to what?
10. A brass threepenny bit had how many sides?
11. How many shillings were there to the pound?
12. What were the words used to denote pound, shilling, penny?

General

1. What date did decimalisation occur?
2. Which British coin was introduced in February 1971 and withdrawn from circulation in December 1984?
3. What name is given to a specialist who collects and deals in coins?
4. The British one pound coin was introduced in April of which year?
5. How many sides does a British 20 pence coin have?
6. Where exactly was the Royal Mint established in 886 AD?
7. Where is the Royal Mint situated today?
8. Referring to the two flat faces of coins, what is the opposite side of reverse?

August September Answers

1. The glomerulus - in the kidney
2. The hyoid bone is a small U-shaped (horseshoe-shaped) solitary bone, situated in the midline of the neck
3. Islets of Langerhans - in the pancreas
4. The anvil (incus) - in the middle ear
5. The alveoli – in the lungs
6. The supercilia – the region of the eyebrows
7. The philtrum is the midline groove in the upper lip that runs from the top of the lip to the nose.
8. The epiglottis is a flap of tissue that sits beneath the tongue at the back of the throat.
9. The Eustachian tube is a small passageway that connects your throat to your middle ear.
10. Golgi body – in all plant and animal cells
11. The pineal gland is a small, pea-shaped gland in the brain
12. The uvula - the little fleshy hanging ball in the back of the throat.

Continued overleaf...

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1. Clavicle – collarbone
2. Patella – knee cap
3. Hallux – the first (big) toe
4. Trachea – windpipe
5. Elbow – funny bone (the "funny bone" in the elbow is actually the ulnar nerve, a nerve that crosses the elbow)
6. Navel – tummy button
7. Phalanges – bones in the fingers and toes
8. Gingiva - gums

The Tour of Britain

The magnificent Tour of Britain Cycle Race came through Barny on Tuesday. Not brilliant weather conditions, but the riders produced a scintillating finish in a truly heroic battle with each other and the elements. Black over Bill's mother's - in this case Sunderland, the end of the stage— doesn't quite describe the intensity of storminess. Here is a picture taken by Pete Redgrave from County Bridge. See others on the website.





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Group	Meeting Time	Contact Details
Art Appreciation	1 st Wed pm	Roger Stanyon 01833 631758
Birdwatching	3 rd Monday am	Andrew Lapworth 07962 038052
Book Group 2	2 nd Mon pm	Elizabeth Long 01833 641494
Book Group 3 Room to Read	3 rd Wed pm	Annie Clouston 01833 637091
Chess		Diana Marks 01833 631616 07762 626912
Climate Solutions	1 st Thurs am	Kate Bailey 07867 683195
Discussion	2 nd Fri am	Glen Howard 01833 631639
French Conversation	4 th Thurs pm	Stella Kirton 01388 488919
Gardening	1 st Fri pm	Pauline Fawcett 01833 638020
Genealogy	1 st Thurs pm	Alan Swindale 01388 488348
Geography	3 rd Thurs 2pm	Gerald Blake 01833 650899
Geology	4 th Mon am	Bob Tuddenham 07812 378004
Historic Environment	2 nd Thurs 10am	Tim Meacham 07847 182554
iPad & iPhone	4 th Fri 2pm	Mike Sweeting 01833 630005
Italian Conversation	Every Wed am	Marie Jenkins 07754 205664
Lunch Group	3 rd Wed noon	Jane Mathieson 01388 710741
Needlecraft	1 st Mon pm	Glen Howard 01833 631639
Painting	2 nd Fri 10am	Val Hobbs 07900 497503
Philosophy	4 th Tues 10am	Ruth Sansom 01325 401850

Group	Meeting Time	Contact details
Photography	1 st Tues	Jane Mathieson 01388 710741
Poetry	2 nd Wed 10am	Annie Clouston 01833 637091
Science and Technology	2 nd Mon am	Roy Tranter 01833 638288
Scrabble	1st Mon pm	Lilian Smith 01833 650628
Spanish Conversation	3 rd Thurs 10am	Lusia McAnna 01833 638989
Table Tennis	Every Friday 3pm	Peter Singer 07508 663998
Theatre	Varies	Elizabeth Formstone 07979 204212
Travel/Day Trips		Jane Mathieson 01388 710741
Understanding Classical Music	4 th Friday 10am	Bill Heyes 01833 640885
Walking Groups		
Shorter walks 3-4 miles	4 th Monday Phone	Sue Overton 07512 368884
Walking 4-6 miles	2 nd Tues 10am Phone	Gillian Barnes-Morris 07941 852165
Walking 7-9 miles	3 rd Wed 10am	Nicky Grace nickygrace729@gmail.com
Fell Walking	4 th Wed	Annie Clouston 01833 637091
Wildflower Group	2 nd Wed 2pm	Kate Keen 07880 741151
Wine Group	3 rd Tues pm	Tim Meacham 07847 182554

Coming up at your Community Arts Centre

Thurs 22 Sept 7.00pm	FILM – Downton Abbey: A New Era (12A) with subtitles The Crawley family goes on a grand journey to the South of France to uncover the mystery of the dowager countess's newly inherited villa.
Fri 23 Sept 7.30pm	THEATRE – Phoney Towers: The Stage Show (12+) A tribute to the classic TV series <i>Fawlty Towers</i> .
Sat 24 Sept 7.30pm	COMEDY– Scott Bennett: Great Scott (14+) Recently described by the Evening Standard as “ <i>Live comedy’s best kept secret.</i> ”
Tues 27 Sept 7.15pm	LIVE SCREENING – Royal Opera House: Madama Butterfly (12A) Puccini’s entrancing and heart-breaking opera.
Thurs 29 Sept 7.30pm	SPOKEN WORD – Lee Schofield: Fighting for Nature on a Lake District Hill Farm Hosted by Teesdale Special Flora’s Plants on the Edge Project.
Fri 30 Sept 7.30pm	THEATRE – A Doll’s House (12+) Elysium Theatre Company perform Henrik Ibsen’s landmark drama.
Sat 1 Oct 7.00pm	MUSIC – The Reg Vardy Band Premier Brass Band of Northeast England.
Thurs 6 Oct 7.00pm	LIVE SCREENING – National Theatre Live: Jack Absolute Flies Again (12A)
Sat 8 Oct 6.00pm	FUNDRAISER – Variety Show Starring Freddie Davies and Alfie Joey, together with local talent.
Thurs 13 Oct 7.30pm	SPOKEN WORD – Leif Bersweden: Where the Wildflowers Grow – My Botanical Journey Through Britain and Ireland. Hosted by Teesdale Special Flora’s Plants on the Edge Project.
Fri 14 Oct 8.30pm	MUSIC – Unkle Bob Indie-folk-pop quintet.
Thurs 20 Oct 7.00pm	FILM – Elvis (12A) with subtitles Starring Tom Hanks.