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FORUM

APRIL 2024
No. 24/04



u3a

CHAIRWOMAN'S LETTER - APRIL 2024

Dear Friends

This seems appropriate on another grey day:

April Day by Caroline Anne Southey

All day the low-hung clouds have dropped
Their garnered fullness down;
All day that soft, gray mist hath wrapped
Hill, valley, grove, and town.

Everyone must be fed up with the RAIN! I have found myself screaming expletives as I've stuck my head out in the morning to bring in the milk. I have also – anyone in the fellwalking group knows this - a magnetic-like attraction to floundering in gullies of mud. This has been my fate on two occasions in the last week, one so embarrassingly bad that I had to swathe my lower half in a waterproof to protect the last vestiges of my dignity. At least I had a soft landing.

Nevertheless, glimpses of proper green, vibrant, vital, burgeoning Spring are out there: Primroses on our woody banks, wild garlic carpeting the woodland floor, wood anemones responding to the shafts of light through trees. The Polyanna in me is trying its best to get out. I hope your inner Polyannas are feeling the pull.

In slightly better weather our Weekend Workshop programme this month delivered a walking tour of Barnard Castle, and once again we were faced with what a gem of a little town we live in – almost impossible to discover all of its hidden places, but worthwhile trying. You will see from the report that a recurring theme in our sauntering was the transience of our lives, and the implicit message that we should get on with the business of being alive, hopefully, actively and companionably. You know what I'm going to say... make the most of the u3a!

Gather ye rosebuds while ye may...

With very best wishes

Annie

Cover photograph: Looking over to Kirkcarrion, by Jenny Lee

It's Your Forum

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All editors receive all contributions and share the email account.

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 interesting articles and silliness we can include! Please limit submissions to 1 page or 400 words, and 1 photo, and send them to the Forum Editor at:

forumeditor@teesdaleu3a.org.uk

DEADLINE for the next edition: Tuesday 7th May and next month's editor is Ian. 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.

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MARCH MONTHLY MEETING

Neil Hanson: Stories from the Tan Hill Inn

Report by Ian Reid

Everyone has a story about the Tan Hill Inn and Neil Hanson, the speaker at Teesdale u3a, had many that we had not heard before. Neil became the landlord of the Tan Hill Inn in 1978, having worked in a variety of jobs, travelled round the wild twice and also been editor of the Good Beer Guide. The facilities at the Tan Hill Inn were fairly primitive. On average it rained 250 days per year and it was common to be snowed in for several weeks during the winter. It helped that the farming community were very supportive. This support included Faith, a charming elderly lady from Keld who travelled in the Post Office van sitting amongst the post bags, as there were no passenger seats then. There were many instances of lock-ins because of the poor weather and on one occasion when the British Naturist organisation were staying, the weather was so cold the naturists were indistinguishable from the normal visitors.

Neil and his wife left the pub for a period but 4½ years later, they were offered the opportunity to buy it. After a good deal of haggling with the owner known for his 'thriff', a price was agreed and they bought it. The Inn was not in good condition but after 2 hectic weeks of refurbishment, they reopened it. This decision was popular with the locals and even Faith returned, still being transported in the Post Office van.

The windows in the Inn were in very poor condition and Neil decided to involve the manufacturer Everest to replace them, offering the firm an advertising opportunity in return. We all remember the advert involving Ted Moulton and the feather, showing the draught free qualities of the windows. In the ad Ted lost his hat in the gale outside, but Neil revealed that a hidden fishing line was actually used to pull the hat off. The advert was very good for business and despite the conservation officer's objections, planning permission was granted.

Neil now spends his time as a public speaker and writer, being the author of over 60 books, including some ghost written for others.

This was a very engaging and entertaining talk which brought back memories to many in the audience.

NEXT MEETINGS AT THE WITHAM

23rd May - Jean Harrod - Life as a Diplomat

Jean Harrod spent much of her life working overseas as a British diplomat in Embassies and High Commissions in Australia, Brussels, the Caribbean, China, East Berlin, Indonesia, Mauritius, and Switzerland. She has travelled extensively around the world and writes about all the countries she had lived in, or visited. Jean is also known as crime writer and creator of the fictional diplomat and amateur detective Jess Turner.

27th June - Morlin Ellis - The History of Spanish Art in 15 Objects

Research Curator, Spanish Gallery and Library, Auckland Project.

WEEKEND WORKSHOP - Report by Annie Clouston Street Names Walking Tour of Barney Photographs by Ian Royston

On a day that was just about to become very blustery Tim Meacham and I set off with nine members to walkabout town and rediscover some of its history. The more you look...the more you find! When we did our reccy we romped round the course, without rehearsing our narrative, in less than one hour. However, the distractions and the talking and the contributions of participants, rich though they were, led to a much longer tour of the town. Thank the heavens the rain held off.

We started at the Witham, having made the executive decision that we could only realistically cover the centre and the north west sector. We circled the Witham and then after a short diversion up Newgate to see a hidden gem, (see i) that we had not clocked before our reccy, walked via King Street, where we found another gem (ii). Basically the same message engraved in stone in two languages: i) Remember man is mortal, and ii) Remember life is short (this message usually ends *carpe diem* – seize the day).



(i)



(ii)

Progressing uphill in Galgate (from Gallowgate) – where public executions by hanging were the entertainment of the day back in the 14th - 18th centuries, and discussing the origins of Balliol Street, and the connection of the Balliol family with the “Bernard’s Castle” along the way, we saw in a front garden, the amazing plinth (iii), possibly an altar, recognised by one of our u3a members, John Watkinson, as dating back to Roman times, with an inscription to prove it.



We followed Galgate to Montalbo Road (Josephine Bowes, Countess of Montalbo) and discussed railway history in Barney which neatly took us to the old station and then on to the Stationmaster’s house and beyond it to Bouch Way, named for the bridge engineer, Thomas Bouch, forever blighted by the Tay Bridge Disaster of 1879. By now, our time was very nearly up so we returned to the town centre via Vere Road.

There is so much more... and we will be repeating a street names walking tour in September, perhaps with a slightly different route. Thank you to Tim for all his conscientious research and to our fellow walkers for their contributions.



FUTURE WORKSHOPS

May 18th - Cross Stitch - Places still available.

Contact **Hilary Dunnighan** hilary.dunnighan@gmail.com

June 22nd - Tour of Spirit of Yorkshire Distillery and Filey - The tour is now full but places are available on the coach for a day at the seaside / Filey to do your own thing. Contact **Sue Overton** **07512 368884**

July 6th— Saturday, 6 July, 10.00-12.00, Circle Dancing with Nic Worsnop in Hill Top Cottage garden, Boldron (or in Boldron Village Hall if wet) - cost £3. Contact **Hazel Yeadon** to book: **01833 638710** hazelyeadon@hotmail.com

FUTURE DAY AND LONGER TRIPS

19th April - Hawes & Wensleydale Cheese Creamery.

Leaving Barnard Castle at 09:00, returning before 18:00.

Cost £21.00 includes coach & entry. A couple of seats still available

25th May - Pot Fest, Penrith.

Leaving Barnard Castle at 09:15 returning before 18:00.

Cost £19.00 includes coach & entry. There are few seats still available.

22nd June - Wool Fest, Milnthorpe,

Leaving Barnard Castle at 09:00 returning before 18:00.

Cost £25.00 includes coach & entry. There are a few seats still available.

20th September - Woodhorn Museum, Ashington

Leaving Barnard Castle at 09:00 returning before 18:00.

Cost £22.00 includes coach & entry. There are a few seats still available.

You can pay by cash or cheque made out to 'Teesdale U3A'.

Please contact **Jane Mathieson** **01388 710741** for more information.

2nd September Stratford, Lichfield and National Arboretum

There are now 19 of us booked on this trip organised by National Holidays. We will be staying at the Royal Court Hotel in Coventry, dinner, bed and breakfast for 4 nights, leaving on Monday, The cost is £299 per person and there is a single supplement of £70. There is one single room still available and there are 10 places left on the coach. We hope National Holidays will pick us up in Barnard Castle, otherwise Maudes Coaches will get us to the pick up point which will involve a small extra charge.

Bookings: **Kyle Travel** **01833 690303**

Details: **Dorothy Jameson** **01833 637957**

GROUP REPORTS

ANDROID PHONE GROUP - Report by Martyn Radcliffe

Intrepid Android phone users with devices in hand gathered once again in the Guide HQ building.

The meeting dealt with downloading documents and images from the Android phone to either a laptop/PC or an SSD drive. It was discussed about the type of connector whether Micro USB B or C depending on handset that was being used but that converters were available.

Connecting to a computer was relatively easy as the standard charging cable can be used so that the telephone acts as an external drive but when selecting a hard drive to connect directly to the phone the type of connector was important.

A crib sheet for the session will be made available.

Next Meeting is on 2nd May 2024

ART APPRECIATION GROUP - Report by Tony Seward

The American Realist painter Winslow Homer was the subject of our March meeting - very big in the States but not so well known here, there being no works by him in British public collections. This lack was largely redressed by a major exhibition at the National Gallery in 2022. As a result, there is now more awareness, not only of his work in New England and the Caribbean, but of a strong English connection – his two-year stay in Cullercoats, near Tynemouth. We viewed a full-length lecture from the curator, and a supplementary talk which included an interview with a descendant of one of the fisherwomen who modelled for him at Cullercoats.

Homer began as an illustrator for magazines, especially of scenes from the American Civil War (1861-5). This gave him a solid grounding in realism, prompting him to develop a strongly concentrated style, stripped of all inessentials. He is probably best loved for his depictions of sturdy, Huck Finn-type American boys, playing and relaxing in the great outdoors, but he never loses sight of the more sombre realities, in particular slavery and the aftermath of the American Civil War.



Snap the Whip

He was also developing a monumental treatment of themes suggested by humanity's struggle with nature – storms, shipwrecks, rocky shore-lines, crashing waves. He was attracted to Cullercoats by the hard lives of the fisherfolk, and in particular by the actions of the lifeboat brigade. These gave him images which on his return to the US he worked up into powerful tributes to the heroism of ordinary people in the face of adversity.



Inside the Bar

Late in his career he discovered the brilliant colours and light of the Caribbean, completely changing his palette to evoke its lush vegetation and teeming seas. Even so, he continued to treat the darker themes that were central to his vision: man's inhumanity to man, and the pitilessness of nature. These culminated in what many regard as his crowning achievement: *The Gulf Stream* depicts a lone negro on a wrecked boat in a storm, surrounded by sharks, with only a few sticks of sugar cane for sustenance. Here the influence of Turner's *Slave Ship* is unmistakable.



The Gulf Stream

Next up - 1st May Caroline Chapman will join us to talk about her new book *A Place Apart. The Artist's Studio 1400-1900*.

AUTOMOTIVE GROUP - Report by David Yeadon

Five members of the Automotive Group sampled the empty and twisting roads of Teesdale, crossing over into Cumbria to Brough, up and up to Tan Hill Inn, where we enjoyed some welcome refreshment, and down in the pouring rain into Arkengarthdale, and back home over The Stang.

In Tan Hill Inn we chatted to two Australian ladies who were doing the Coast to Coast, but it looked like they had not found out that it is much easier to do it West to East, with the wind and rain on your back. Oh dear - they were doing it East to West, battling the wind and rain all the way. They had taken 8 days from Robin Hood's Bay - you could see where they had come from from there!

In Church Brough we visited the grave of Clifford Allison, a local man who had been a Formula One Grand Prix driver for Ferrari and Lotus between 1958 to 1961. When he retired from racing he worked for the family business in Brough, driving a school bus - we hope at a more leisurely pace!

The Automotive Group aims to meet on the third Tuesday of the month; for a drive, event or informal social get-together.

21st May;
16th July;
20th August;
17th September;
13th October
19th November.

With special events:

13th June - 5:00pm to 7:00pm
Car Barn Drivers Club evening. Red Row, Beamish.

28th July - All day
British Touring Cars Championship, Croft.

Please contact Peter Colley if you wish to attend or join the group.

BIRDWATCHING Report by Andrew Lapworth

Monday 18th March saw 10 of us assemble at the green bridge in Thorngate for our walk along the Demesnes towards Egglestone Abbey. We welcomed 4 new members to the group. March is always an unpredictable month for bird watching: winter visitors are still around but later in the month we expect to see our first summer migrants arriving around the Spring Equinox. The day was dry and occasionally sunny but it was cold.

As we paused on the Demesnes car park I reminded everyone we had seen and heard our first Chiffchaffs on this walk at the same time last year. Sure enough, as we stood there we began to pick out distant and nearer Chiffchaffs, singing their onomatopoeic name. *“Alone of all the warblers, the Chiffchaff has given us the right to expect him in March; he is the forerunner of the rush of song birds that is on its way to us....This is why the first hearing of a Chiffchaff moves us so each Spring. He is a symbol, a promise, an assurance of what is to come”* (Lord Grey).

From the same spot Terry soon found a Buzzard with an accompanying Sparrowhawk overhead; a Mistle Thrush was singing its wild song from the very top of a tree. Along the river we found Grey Wagtails, a Dipper by the mill, and later, a female Goosander hauled out on a rock giving us good views through the ‘scope. We spent a little time sorting out the differences between the gulls: Black-headed were mostly in their summer plumages, and we found a single Common Gull with them; later a large Herring Gull was watched on the river. Our eyes were peeled for a Kingfisher but we were not in luck. We also compared the differences between Carrion Crows, Jackdaws and Rooks.

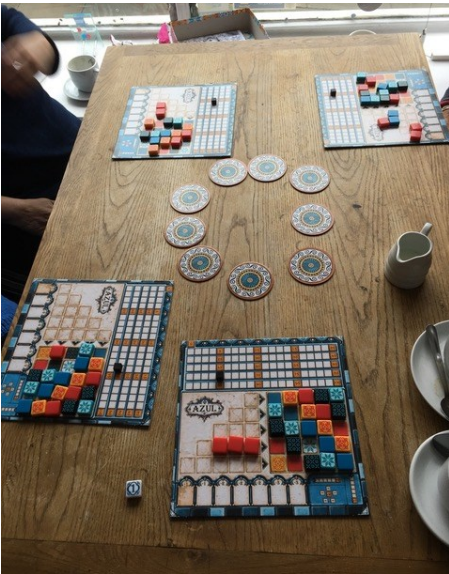
Pausing to see a Nuthatch on a riverside tree, Roger found a close and very obliging Goldcrest (Britain’s smallest bird) that we watched for some time at eye-level, along with a Siskin. We walked back on the high level path by the playing fields and allotments on the Demesnes and added Long-tailed Tits, a super eye-level view of a Kestrel, noisy Oystercatchers and a Song Thrush in song. All in all, at least 26 species were seen during the morning along this local and popular walk.

Female Goosander (*Mergus merganser*) often nest in holes in trees or large nest boxes; their 2-day old ducklings are well known for leaping from their high nests and bouncing when they land on the ground.



Female Goosander - Photo: Andrew Lapworth

BOARD GAMES - Report by Hazel McCallum



Five of us met up in The Breakfast Room at the Old Well Inn to enjoy a fun afternoon of board game playing. We welcomed Carole, a new member, and then had our traditional warm up with a few rounds of Bananagrams. Annie and Hazel were winners of our Bananagrams games.

We then played Azul again, after last month's success. This was new to three of us with Annie and Jane having played it at last month's meeting. Azul is a tile based game in two phases. The first phase involves selecting tiles to lay on the first half of the board, and the second phase involves building your tiled arrangement using the tiles you gathered in phase 1.

As you lay your tiles in Phase 2, you earn points. The game ends when one player completes a horizontal line of tiles, and the winner is the player with the most points. We had time to play two games with Sue winning both games.

Our May meeting will be from 2pm on Monday 13th at The Old Well Inn.

ROOM TO READ BOOK GROUP - Report By Karen Teasdale *The Little Coffee Shop In Kabul – Deborah Rodriguez.*

The group met on Wednesday 20th March 2024 and there was, in the main, a less than warm welcome for the book. It was released in 2013 and there was a general opinion that it was firmly aimed at the American market who are very ignorant of what was happening in Afghanistan. One has to accept that over a decade has elapsed since the book was written and much has changed in the fortunes of Afghanistan and this in some ways affects the way one views the story now.

The author spent five years living in Kabul and owned a coffee house, she also married an Afghan.

The story is about five very different women who form unlikely friendship meeting in the cafe that gives the book its title. Interwoven into the story are male protagonists who provide some of the love interests. The main characters in the story are as follows:

American Sunny (possibly modelled on the author) who runs the coffee shop who moved to Kabul with a boyfriend after 9/11. Sixty year old, widowed, modernist Muslim Halajan who owns the building also remembers life before the Taliban took over. Yasmina, a pregnant widowed young Afghan who was kidnapped by drug lords but saved by Sunny who now lives and works in the cafe but her pregnancy is being kept as a secret. Wealthy American Candice who left her husband for an Afghan man. Isabel a freelance journalist who writes about drug lords and opium addiction.

The story transports you into a world that is not easy to understand from a western perspective, you feel the warmth and hubbub of the cafe - that said there are shocking parts to the story that brutally cover the horrendous treatment of women and highlight the challenges that females face through no fault of their own.

Although the overwhelming opinion was negative it generated an interesting discussion. People felt it had undeveloped potential and there was a feeling that it contained too many story arcs. Plot points which could have been expanded disappeared or were terminated too quickly. The ending of the book was too convenient being tied up in a "pretty bow" which was not in any way realistic.

Overall it is a "nice" book to pass an afternoon or beach holiday with but could have offered so much more.

The "scores on the doors" were 4 stars for Book Groups and 2 stars to recommend to a friend.

CLIMATE SOLUTIONS GROUP - Report by Kate Bailey

We chatted about the wet weather, signs of spring, wildflower meadows and the possibility of a site visit to see Bowber Head Farm at Ravenstonedale. Looking at the Cumbria Wildlife Trust website, it suggests the hay meadows will be at their best in mid-late June.

We discussed an article about regenerative farming practices that prioritise soil health and natural systems rather than the production of arable crops and livestock. One farmer in Somerset has extracted himself from traditional supply chains for his wheat, introduced grass-fed pigs to restore the soil, and has developed a local 'circular' economy with local mills and bakeries, and with independent butchers and restaurants who buy his pigs. There are many positive stories in the article even though it concludes that food supply chains in the UK are not well equipped to deal with small-scale production - <https://www.positive.news/environment/agriculture/spotlight-on-soil-farming-returns-to-its-roots/>

Some of the background to the current academic debate around a possible start date for the Anthropocene (man-made) geological epoch was considered. The differing points of view are explored in the article -

<https://theconversation.com/the-anthropocene-is-not-an-epoch-but-the-age-of-humans-is-most-definitely-underway-224495>

There has been a recent contact about our paused 'Pollinator Park' proposal. We did say originally that we hoped to plant a site for public enjoyment in or around Barnard Castle but we have had no success promoting the idea of other organisations applying for grants for the potential sites we identified. It may be that the suggested farm project could fund itself.

Reminder for the Geography Group meeting for May 16th - Chris Greenwell, Head of Dept of Chemistry at Durham University will talk about "A Time of Waste: Geoscience and the Circular Economy" -

CHESSE - Report by Diana Marks

We had four players this month. It makes life so much easier when we have an even number of players! Two players had a very quick game - over in half an hour - which fitted in beautifully as one of the group had explained he wouldn't be joining us until 2.30. We then split into two groups and proceeded to play, although two of us didn't manage to finish our game by 4pm so we each took photos and can mull over the possible outcome(s) at our leisure until our next meeting.

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD GROUP - Report by Sue Overton

Today's warm-up of 12 anagrams, 5 double-definitions and 7 other clue types did the job of stimulating the old grey matter of our members before progressing to the clue type of the day, the **additive** clue.

This consists of the solution word being split into parts to form the actual solution

A + B = solution C

It has no specific indicator but often contains linkwords such as *facing*, *alongside*, *with*, *next to*, indicating that the parts A and B have to be set alongside each other. In **down clues**, the linkwords would be *on top of*, *looking down on* etc. reflecting the grid position of letters to be entered.

Example:

Pole employed ahead of young local worker (8)

Definition = local worker

Linkwords = employed a head of

Wordplay and what to do = Pole employed ahead of young

Add POLE = BAR to YOUNG = TENDER

Solution = **BARTENDER** (one working in a local i.e. pub)

We then worked our way through 10 more additive clues before finishing with the Times daily cryptic crossword, recognising many of the different clue types of which we are becoming increasingly familiar.

If you would like to join us in the Guide HQ, Birch Road to give your brain a workout, our next meeting is Wednesday 8th May 2pm -4pm.

Convenor: **Sue Overton 07512 368884**

DISCUSSION GROUP - Report by Glen Howard

There was a lot going on in the news this week and we discussed many of the hot topics: the Right to Protest; 2p reduction of NI; Bypasses; difficulties facing teachers of children starting school; Royal Mail; Donald Trump; Aid for Gaza; Transwomen; Carers in Homes.

Our next meeting will be on Friday 10th May.

If you would like to join us please give me a ring on **01833 631639**.

GARDENING GROUP

Report by Julie Archer, Kate Keen and Fran Hindley

The gardening group continues to grow with further new members joining. Our thanks to Celia and Pauline who are now welcoming new members.

In April we had a talk from Kelvin Vincent on Growing Chrysanthemums and Dahlias in the garden and containers. Kelvin is the Secretary of the Darlington Chrysanthemum and Dahlia Society. He started early growing plants from the age of 8 and learned how to cross pollinate at an early age. During his teenage years he pursued other activities but returned to growing at the age of 19. He had a full career in the police service and served in Barnard Castle for some years in his early career.

In fact Kelvin focussed mainly on growing dahlias. In his Newton Aycliffe garden he now has 4 greenhouses to support his efforts. At the peak he was growing 500 dahlias but has now kept it to 175 as growing for exhibit is a lot of work. In January he starts off by growing from tubers in the heated greenhouse. In April he takes cuttings and plants these up in cell trays of 40 plants. Every 2 weeks they are potted on and planted out in the garden around June. Each plant in the garden has its own individual support as the plants are susceptible to blowing over in strong winds. When the flowers are ready for the shows he displays them in accordance with the society rules. If a particular type of dahlia is too large then it will be rejected. It seems to be a harsh world for these competitive growers.

This was another interesting talk which was enjoyed by the group.

On **3rd May** we will be having our first coach trip to **Holker Hall and Gardens**.

On **7th June** we will be visiting the **RHS Bridgewater Garden**.

GEOGRAPHY GROUP - Report by Jane Harrison

Our speaker in March was cartographic artist, Dr Kevin Sheehan, of Manuscript Maps. Kevin is a graduate of Durham University with three degrees – none of which are in Geography! Since his childhood in Colorado, Kevin has always loved cartography and for his doctorate he researched Portolan charts. These charts date from the 13th century, the earliest being Venetian, Genoese, and Catalan charts of the Mediterranean, which were hand-drawn on vellum. Later charts covered the Atlantic coasts of Europe and Africa. They are very distinctive with their networks of rhumb lines, prominent portrayal of natural hazards and labelling of place names at right angle to the coast. Later, these charts were produced by the Portuguese, English and the Dutch as well and continued to be produced until the 17th century.

Using experimental archaeology techniques that he encountered as an undergraduate, Kevin reproduced three portolan charts, two of which were drawn using materials available in medieval times. This allowed him to establish the probable methods used by the cartographers, as well as giving insight into the time required. Over the centuries Portolan charts became less and less accurate suggesting that they were copied and re-copied. Kevin questioned whether the maps were used as navigational tools at all or were merely for display in the houses of well-to-do merchants.

Whilst at Durham Kevin was drawing maps for pleasure. A commission to draw a black and white, antique-inspired map of the city and its colleges was soon followed by a map of the pubs. Kevin now works full time as a cartographer, producing maps of Roman Britain, the shipping forecast areas, and Paris, to name but a few. The whisky map of Scotland has been so popular it's on its eleventh edition. All maps must be researched and planned out in detail. They are then painstakingly drawn in pencil, starting with the calligraphy, before being inked using a nibbed dip pen. Fortunately, errors – whether spelling mistakes or ink blobs – can be rectified! His largest and most detailed map is a double-hemisphere map of the moon to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Apollo 11 landing. This took months to draw. We were all astounded by the detail. Kevin has offered 20% off maps for u3a members using discount code: U3AMAPS: www.manuscriptmaps.com

Next meeting: Thursday 16th May, at 2pm, in The Witham. Professor Chris Greenwell (Durham) “A time of waste: geoscience and the circular economy”. The talk will explore, through case studies, the promise, and challenges of re-using mineral wastes.



U3A GEOLOGY REPORT by Bob Tuddenham

In March we returned to face to face meetings at the Witham with a very interesting and varied meeting.

In the first half, Jane Harrison gave a fascinating talk entitled 'Marble or not?' which covered the history of this rock from its formation by metamorphism through to its uses across the world as a valuable building stone and for iconic sculptures. Jane showed us five slides of 'marble' buildings and sculptures and asked which we thought were actually marble? Locally, Frosterley marble is not a true marble but there was some discussion about whether sugar limestone in Upper Teesdale is a marble or not.

In the coffee break, Les Knight showed us some erratics that he had recently picked out up at Filey Brigg. They had probably come from as far as Scotland and even Norway!

In the second half Les gave us an excellent, well informed talk on 'Coal the rock that keeps on giving'. He outlined the history of coal from its geological formation and hazardous extraction by mining to its fundamental role in the industrial revolution and beyond. This versatile black rock was the primary source of energy in the 19th and early 20th centuries, was essential for the iron industry and was the source of numerous valuable organic chemicals leading to products such as aniline dyes. Les talked briefly about coal based methane which uses a similar procedure to shale fracking. It has been estimated that there are some 10,000 billion tons of subsea coal in the UK waters of the North Sea but of course, we are unlikely ever to use it given the environmental impact of coal on global warming.

Our next meeting will be at The Witham on Monday 10 am **May 27th**. All are welcome to join us. Please contact the convenor for details

iPad & iPhone GROUP - Report by Mike Sweeting

We welcomed Shirley as a new member to the Group.

There was a very interesting programme on the Tonight series on ITV on 7 March (now available on ITVX). It was about digital exclusion. We watched the programme and it gave rise to much discussion

The main topic of the day was Google Maps, its contents, features and its use as a cross between satnav and TripAdvisor. In many ways it is easier to use than Apple Maps but does not have the same privacy protections. The choice is with the user.

Lastly, we looked at how to fix (hopefully) a water damaged iPhone. This found a resonance with some members of our Group.

This was the 23rd session of the iPad and iPhone Group and those present were much in agreement with the suggestion that we should devote some time each month going over some of the more basic features and operation of the iPhone and iPad. Some of these will have changed in any case since first covered.

ITALIAN CONVERSATION - Marie Jenkins

We meet weekly at Andaluc a Caf e at 82A Galgate. Over coffee we talk in Italian about current affairs. We also read a passage of a book in Italian which we have already prepared at home, and then each person reads and translate part of the passage. Contact **Marie Jenkins** on **07754 205664**

LUNCH GROUP - Report by Jane Mathieson

We met at The Bowes Museum for lunch this month. Those who chose Beef Sandwich, Wild Mushroom & Celeric Risotto and Welsh Rarebit with Bacon were pleased with their meals. There were mixed feelings about the Cottage Pie, some liked it but a few thought it was insipid with large lumps of shredded beef. Some of us still had room for a pudding, which were very good. There was a lot chatting as there were 16 of us, including a new member which was good to see.

Next meeting: **The Brownlow Arms** , Caldwell, **5pm, 15th May**

PAINTING GROUP - Report by Val Hobbs and Martin Page

Seven members turned up for our meeting, three of these being new.

The theme of the day was mushrooms, carrying on from last month's sketching and painting flowers in water colour. Mushrooms make an amazing still life drawing/painting due to the intricacies of their gills and skin patterns. Replicating the light and shade requires subtle observation and even more so with the delicate markings created by brush and pen.

The artists partook of coffee and shortbread to sustain them at the break, and then finalised their creations with some excellent results.

For more details, contact **Val Hobbs** on **07900497503** or valblackhobbs@gmail.com.



Philosophy Group - Report by Clare Tuddenham

Our first meeting of 2024 saw us attempting to compare the philosophies of the eastern and western worlds. Do they differ and if so, how and why? Traditionally, did cultural differences between east and west give rise to philosophical differences, or was it rather the other way round?

These are big questions on a very large-scale topic, so necessarily we painted with a broad brush. In the philosophical way of things, for every broad statement that is made, plenty of exceptions can be found. Nevertheless, some overall differences can be seen: the west has focused on individualism, reason and the pursuit of knowledge while in eastern thinking there has been more emphasis on the collective, interconnectedness and balance. In the west, logic, scientific enquiry and individual rights have been important; the east has considered spiritual enlightenment, self-realisation and inner peace.

Having identified some “big hitters” (Socrates, Plato and Aristotle in the west; Confucius, Lao Tzu and the Buddha in the east), we spent some time digging down into specific areas of philosophy such as the nature of reality, the theory of knowledge, time, and self and identity. On the subject of ethics we found some interesting common ground – Aristotle in Greece and Confucius in China both proposed ethical theories based on virtue.

We concluded this topic in the subsequent session on 27th February with a look at Chinese political philosophy. Confucius himself lived during the turbulent and unstable “warring tribes” period and advocated a system of government which would help to bring about peace and prosperity. A hereditary ruler would be surrounded by ministers who had achieved particular standards of education and lived according to the Way, or Tao, with its focus on virtue and benevolence. Leaders were to set an example of how to live – are there lessons we can learn here? There was of course, no mention of democracy.

These general principles proved long lasting – they underpinned Chinese government for around 2000 years. They were lost in the era of the Cultural Revolution Communism but survived in modified form in Hong Kong and Taiwan.

The topic generated some good discussions, after which we continued on a new topic, the 20th century French philosopher, Michel Foucault, led by Christine (more on that in next month’s report). We are nothing if not wide-ranging.

PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP – Report by Alan Kenwright Trip to Richmond

On 2 April, the photography group met up in Richmond to explore the old town and the nearby ruins of Easby Abbey. Being the day after Easter Monday, a number of members had other commitments but eight of us managed to assemble and spend a pleasant time exploring the locality looking for interesting shots. The weather looked threatening for much of the time but mercifully the rain held off and we were able to wander around without having to dive for shelter. After a couple of hours, several of us reconvened for lunch in the café of The Station, where the wait for a table allowed us time to explore the possibilities for indoor architectural photography. All in all, a good day out.

Our next trip will be to South Gare, Redcar, on Tuesday 7 May. Further details will be circulated by email closer to the time and car sharing can be arranged.



Richmond Street

Right: Richmond Castle



Below: The Station roof



POETRY GROUP - Report by Terry Whitfield

As we met on a breezy day of sunshine and showers, it seemed appropriate that the theme was 'weather'.

We started by listening to Ralph McTell singing 'After Rain':

Come on now and dry your eyes
Time will ease away the pain
Clouds disperse and show the clear skies
The earth smells sweeter after rain.'

In 'Composed in August' by Robert Burns. 'Autumn's pleasant weather' is the backdrop to Burns' description of a pastoral idyll of happy birds going about their business, interrupted only by:

Tyrannic man's dominion;
The sportsman's joy, the murd'ring cry,
The flutt'ring gory pinion!

Thomas Hardy came next with 'Weather':

This is the weather the cuckoo likes,
And so do I;
When showers betumble the chestnut spikes, and nestlings fly.'

The Nicaraguan-Salvadoran poet Claribel Alegria (1924-2018) associates weather with her past in her poem 'Rain':

Rain is falling
falling
and memories keep flooding by
they show me a senseless
world.....but I keep loving it
because I do.'

Closer to home was 'Late Snow' by Barney resident Meg Peacocke:

Snow had fallen again and covered
the old dredge and blackened mush
with a gleaming pelt.'

'Summer Shower' by Emily Dickinson was a bit warmer:

A drop fell on the apple tree,
Another on the roof;
A half a dozen kissed the eaves,
And made the gables laugh'.

In 'The Hard' Simon Armitage managed to describe a Portsmouth seascape without mentioning rain or snow at all:

Walk on, drawn to the shipwreck, a mirage of masts
a mile or so out, seemingly true and intact'.

To finish, we were back with the snow again - Wendell Berry's wonderful 'March Snow':

The morning lights
whiteness that has touched the world
perfectly as air.
In the whitened country
under the still fall of the snow
only the river, like a brown earth,
taking all falling darkly
into itself, moves.'

SCRABBLE REPORT by Ray Thompson

There were nine of us this month and we split into three teams for the first games. Paula, Judith and Lillian, Marilyn, Jeanette and Phil, and Ray, Liz and Hilary.

Judith won her game with a score of 217, including a 7 letter (TRAILER) for 71 points. Jeanette won hers with a score of 258 and Ray won his scoring 230. These three winners played together for the second round of games. Liz, Marilyn, Lillian / Phil, Paula, Hilary, made up the other two teams. Liz won with a score of 290, Paula won with 257 including a 7 letter (NETTLED) for 73 points. Jeanette won her second game of the afternoon with a score of 242 including a 7 letter (GROUTER) for 90 points.

Many thanks to Lillian for hosting this month's meet and for the delicious refreshments, tea, coffee and homemade Victoria Sponge and scones.

Our next meet is on May 13th, 2pm at Judith's. Please contact **Judith** on **07790 407152** if you would like to join our happy band.

SPANISH CONVERSATION GROUP Report by Michael Harris

I have spent the winter on the southern coast of Spain where climate change is evident and very worrying. We had one evening of light rain since May 2023 and it was disturbing to see how the Tabernas Desert has expanded in just a few years.

Most of you will have seen that desert if you have ever watched a spaghetti western such as 'The Good, the Bad and the Ugly'. An area that was once covered in wild orchids, narcissi and a multitude of wild flowers each spring, is now just dry, brown, dusty clay covered with withered , old stalks. The only plants surviving are Spanish Broom shrubs and a few curry plants (*helichrysum italicum*).

To keep the group together I sent them all a daily 'Word of the Day', via our WhatsApp group. Well, it was more often a quote of the day or even a cartoon. Having read 'Matilda' in Spanish last year I am requesting from members a way of proceeding in 2024.

1. Garabotas = Scribble, or something else?
2. Knowledge is power!



TABLE TENNIS GROUP - Report by Pete Singer



Tum-ti-tum-ti-tum-ti-tum.....Yes, it's 3pm on a Friday afternoon and time for another episode of The Batters, an everyday story of table tennis folk, set in the idyllic, rural venue of Mickleton Village Hall. All of life unfolds there, with lively exchanges about the state of the world, the lack of buses, members' fitness (especially backs and knees) and holiday adventures - Iceland, New Zealand, Costa Rica and Malta so far this year –

It's a wonder there's anyone left to play. There's impromptu coaching as well – “don't hit it with your thumb”, “try to get it on the table”, “you really need a longer arm” and so on.

Meanwhile, some of us ponder how best to return that wicked, backspin serve – according to the experts, usually with a backhand or forehand “push stroke”, hitting the ball at the top of its bounce, with the bat angled slightly backwards to strike the ball on the back, at the bottom, hitting it short and low over the net, to prevent your opponent from hitting an attacking shot back. That's the theory anyway! We continue with our different versions and hope for the best – it's all you can do.

On a more serious note and on the wider stage, Paul Drinkhall has recently won his seventh Men's Singles final at the Senior National Championships in Nottingham, dethroning Tom Jarvis, while Tin-Tin Ho took a sixth Women's Singles crown and Jack Hunter-Spivey retained his Para Class 2-5 (wheelchair) title. Hunter-Spivey, however, had suffered his first ever defeat in the earlier rounds and only qualified for the final on “countback”, where two players are tied and the winner is decided by counting the total number of games/points won. A close shave!



If you would like to join our group to learn the game, improve your skills or just enjoy playing and socialising, please contact **Peter Singer** (pandjsinger@btinternet.com 07508 663998). All are welcome, whether you play regularly, have not played for some time or have never played before.

WILDFLOWER - Report by Anne Thomson

Our planned March walk along Cotherstone Railway was changed to Kennedy's Pond due to very muddy conditions and no wild flowers. Five of us met to welcome 2 new members, making 7 in total.

Snowdrops and Daffodils, planted by the villagers along the verges and on the East Green, were a colourful sight to behold.

We identified 8 plants and, as there wasn't an exhaustive list of flowers, we included trees identifying them by their buds, catkins or flowers.

Future walks:- Wednesday, 10th April - Eggleston Abbey. Wednesday, 8th May - Cow Green Reservoir to, hopefully, view the spring gentians. Tuesday, 21st May - Bowlees

YOGA GROUP - Report by Merrion Chrisp

U3A's Yoga Group is led by Angela Griffiths, a British Wheel of Yoga Teacher.

The 75 minute sessions are Mindful practice of breath work, yoga postures and relaxation for a healthy body and a calm and peaceful mind.

Participants must have a non-slip (sticky) yoga mat.

This is a floor based practice and unsuitable for those who have had no previous yoga experience.

The current term runs to 29 April.

The following Term runs 13 & 20May and 3 - 24 June.

There may be further terms during the summer.

All the current places are booked but if you would like to be added to the waiting list please contact :Angela Griffiths angelagriffiths5@cloud.com

or Merrion Chrisp – mfchrisp@gmail.com

WALKING GROUPS



SHORTER WALKS - Report by Ian Royston

“It mightn’t be as bad, the weather forecast is not always right”, and it must be said that the Met Office did say that by 14:00 the chance of rain was down to 20% and for 15:00 the cloud icon had changed from black to white, so it seemed churlish not to turn up.

So it was that ten of us set out for a 3½-mile circumnavigation of Grassholme Reservoir. This was a first for many of us as the dam and North Shore has only recently reopened to walkers after construction work had finished but recent rain had not only hidden the old bridge which had remained submerged since 1915 but had brought the waters to the point of overflowing.



Photo: Ian Royston

For the first 500m the weather forecast seemed to have got it right but 'up the dale' is not the same as Barney and by the time we were walking along the South Shore the drizzle started, giving way to steady rain which lasted with little break for the rest of the walk. Oddly, the sheep seemed unbothered.

On a clear sunny day there are stunning views down the Lune Valley and the sight of Kirkcarrion in the distance. For the ten of us the view was largely of our own feet as we picked our way across streams and slippery stones. Then we encountered the mud and not just any mud but the ankle-deep oozing mud that can pull poorly-laced boots from ones feet.

However, there was a brief respite at the Visitors' Centre for terra firma and the loos. With the car park deserted the shop didn't seem to be doing any trade and they must have been disappointed that not one of the ten of us entertained them either. Perhaps it wasn't the day for ice creams.

After crossing the dam we inspected the new stonework on by-wash before we left the metalled track. The footpath back was however a little kinder, less mud, fewer streams and even providing a rather damp seat to take in the view. Now though we also now seemed to be walking into the rain, so it was hoods up, heads down again. Thankfully, it wasn't long before the cars appeared and we could ease our wet and muddied bodies into some shelter.

We hope to have dried out before our next walk.

4-6 MILE WALKING GROUP - Report by Patrick Neills

Richmond

A total of seven intrepid walkers met at Richmond Station on a very damp, misty and murky morning. Fortunately, apart from the start, walking along a variety of good paths meant we did little sliding about. Despite this, we set off in high spirits on the 4 mile circular walk from Richmond, along the River Swale and via Easby Abbey.

Initially the walk was very boggy and slippery following the footpath past the local football club. Up to the right we had excellent views of the castle despite the mist perched high up on the rocks. At the road we turned right crossing the bridge, before climbing steeply up cobbled streets to the castle ramparts and enjoying the views of the river in full spate. We then walked down a steep winding hill and through a small car park, where we enjoyed looking at the waterfall with the weir above it.

We followed the path along the river to the road, crossing the bridge and walking down Lombards Wynd following signs to Easby Abbey. Given the very wet weather the track made the walking easy from here to the finish. At the drummer boy plaque, according to legend, the stone marks the place where the Richmond drummer boy reached into the tunnel that was supposed to lead from Richmond market place to the Abbey. The plaque marks the spot where the sound of drumming stopped and was never heard again. We then followed the lower path along the river where conservation measures including replanting are in progress.

We had a quick refreshment break at Easby Abbey, founded in 1152 by Roald, constable of Richmond Castle, before doing a loop to view the Abbey in the foreground and Richmond Castle on the horizon. We then followed the path along the river, to another bridge and walked along the disused railway line that was part of the old NER Darlington to Richmond route back to Richmond station. As we finished the walk, the weather started to improve!

7 - 9 MILE WALKING GROUP - Report by Nicky Grace

Unfortunately the wet conditions meant that we had to cancel our March walk which was disappointing.

The May walk will be led by Nicky on 15th May. It is likely to be a walk from Bowes but further details will follow. Please let Nicky Grace know if you would like to come along nickygrace729@gmail.com

FELLWALKING - Report by Annie Clouston

Nobody could say we hadn't been warned – it was a MudFest to rival the best of Glastonburys. However, the anticipated inclement weather lasted as long as it took us to get our boots submerged in the lake that was the Demesnes Car Park at Wolsingham, and then the sun got his hat on and came out to play.

Eight of us had a delightful mud-slither of a ten miler almost all the while in view of the Wear. A conversation was had about what was so special about Weardale – love it or hate it, who could be indifferent? I think this walk would win anyone over to the charms of this under-rated valley.

Stepping out from Wolsingham we walked east on the south side the River Wear on the Weardale Way and up to Knitsley Fell trig point. A bit of a slog (“how much further is it, Bob?) but we loafed about there with coffee and snacks, as you can see from the photo, in very pleasing sunshine. Whilst walking I mused upon my companions, and in that childish way that a product of a girls’ grammar school who had a nickname would, I searched for appropriate monikers. So, trekking on that day were: The Legs, The Whippet, The Baldersdale Strider, The Golf Club, The Oracle, Di Maggio, The Pickler and Little Miss Swishy-Swashy. I think they will know who’s who.

We rejoined the Weardale Way to walk to the footbridge over the river. Sitting on some tarry railway sleepers, the railway at our backs and the frisky-full river sparkling with sun-stars at our front, we had our snap. We turned back to base on the north side of the river on footpaths through fields and tracks to Mill Lane and then climbed gently to Greenwell. An old grassy track led us to the B6297 where we dived with death to get across the road to see a stone cross monument to John Dukkett, a catholic priest, who was hanged, drawn and quartered by good Christian Roundheads in 1644 (The Pickler told me that it was a badge of pride among executioners to disembowel and display the innards in front of the living victim. How splendid!). As if crying for him, the heavens opened at this point and we got a thorough soaking.

We returned to Wolsingham across the fields and eschewed the refreshment there opting for the Bradley Burn Farm Café where coffee, cake and post-walk crack was good. Many thanks to Bob for helping us love Weardale all over again.



Photo: Annie Clouston

A HIKE UP THE BORDERS by Pete Singer (or a walk through two countries for the Great North Air Ambulance)

About eighteen months or so ago, on a bit of a whim, I took part in a sponsored walk to help raise funds for the Great North Air Ambulance Service. The walk was 13 miles around the Cleveland Four Peaks, taking in Roseberry Topping (on the bucket list for a long time), Captain Cook's Monument, Codhill Heights and Highcliff Nab (no, I'd never heard of it either). Although I had been fortunate enough never to have had to call on the service, I had read about the great work that they did (occasionally in *The Teesdale Mercury*) and it seemed like an excellent cause to support. There was also the prospect of ticking that item off the bucket list and proving to myself that, as a septuagenarian, such a hike was still within my capability. It turned out to be a very enjoyable day, with a friendly group, good weather and even tea and cakes on the summit of Roseberry Topping (the Fattenberg cake was an excellent energy boost), courtesy of some National Trust volunteers. In the end, I was delighted to have raised over £450 (plus some Gift Aid), thanks to family, friends and other supporters, who so generously sponsored me.

Recently, an email arrived from GNAAS, promoting some more sponsored walks for 2024. The email remained in my inbox for a while, without any further investigation on my part, but I seemed to keep returning to it and started wondering if I should perhaps give it a go. But why? Did I really need a second GNAAS T-shirt? I suppose, as a recreational walker and member of our brilliant u3a walking groups, I am aware of how easy it is for walkers to get into difficulty on the fells, particularly if the weather closes in unexpectedly and GNAAS have often been involved in rescuing injured walkers, providing critical care and transporting them quickly to hospital. They also attend road accidents and many other life-threatening incidents in remote areas like Teesdale, so they are especially important for those of us living in the dale. The service is a charity and receives no government funding, being entirely dependent on donations, so every little helps to keep the three helicopters flying and the rapid response cars on the road.

On Saturday 1 June, therefore, I will be taking part in the Border Walk, which is a 10-mile trek to the heights of Windy Gyle, through the rolling hills straddling the border between Northumberland and Scotland. The walk, described as strenuous, covers upland terrain and promises panoramic views, beautiful landscapes and incredible border history – what more could you want from a walk? Hopefully, the Gyle won't be too Windy and I tell myself that the "strenuous" is probably erring on the side of caution.

Anyway, it should be an interesting outing in a new area and there's time for me to get into shape for the challenge (whether pear-, barrel- or ship-remains to be seen). Staying over in a camping pod in Rothbury should also be fun. The requirement, in addition to the signing-on fee, is to raise a minimum of £100 for GNAAS, so if anyone would be kind enough to make a donation, I have opened a JustGiving page, which can be accessed at www.justgiving.com/page/peter-singer (Note: on Apple devices go to www.justgiving.com and enter Peter Singer in the search bar). Alternatively, of course, any other form of payment would be equally welcome (although preferably not cryptocurrencies, unwanted Christmas presents or livestock of any kind) and may be sent to me at 43 Bouch Way DL12 8FD. Many thanks and I'll let you know how it goes.

AN APPEAL FOR PHOTOGRAPHS FOR THE FORUM

Many thanks to all those of you who have responded with splendid photographs. Here is just one of the many that we have had— more to follow. Please keep them coming.



Photo from Mike Caldwell: A picture of Flushiemere Beck above Bowlees car park where it crosses the Cleveland Dyke to create the waterfall. The molten igneous rock was intruded in the Carboniferous strata and when cooled it was more resistant to erosion than the country rocks, hence the waterfall.

Another Month in Ambridge

Disappointingly, no one has volunteered to release me from this monthly task of bringing you an update from the UK's most tedious village. If you balk at that adjective, kindly defend an alternative position and I can breathe a loud hoorah!

This month has been the George, Jolene and Harrison show. Jolene, intent on saving herself from the retribution of the Big Bad Brummie, has been keeping secret the identity of the owner of the Ambridge Mauler – the XL Bully of the BBB. This has had a terrible effect on her psyche. Normally a hail-fellow well-met ebullient publican she has become a gibbering heap of PTSD cliches with the short fuse to go with it. One victim of her uncharacteristic bad humour has been the ever-revolting George Grundy whose transformation from misogynist to crowd-pleaser lasted as long as the last scriptwriter, and he's re-found the chip on his shoulder, now a giant potato. In short Jolene barred him from The Bull, only to face a stream of invective from George's mother, Emma, who also with the change of scriptwriter has again become the mother blind to the viper she has nurtured in her bosom.

I must confess to a bit of prejudice at this point. I have never liked the Grundys (apart from the redoubtable, long-suffering Clary). The family's place in the soap has provided a working class, likeable-rogue vibe to counteract the country gentry privilege vibe of the Archers dynasty. Likeable, hell no! (Again if you want to contradict me kindly defend an alternative position.) The Grundys being patronised in this way is frankly obnoxious. Anyway, I digress. Apart from his offensive invective, his cheating in the egg and spoon race – egged on, pun intended, by his grandfather Eddie – and his truly nauseating blogging about Bartleby the Donkey, I'm sure he'll come to a bad end, if there is any justice in the world.

Back to Jolene then. She has eventually coughed up her secret and agreed to tell Police Sergeant Harrison Burns – but not yet...for Harrison is busy defending his job at a tribunal that may decide to give him the sack, and all because he wanted to save a friend from the clutches of a Hooray Harry. Fans of Harrison Burns, whose broad Lancashire accent would have Gracie Fields swooning at his feet, will be relieved to know that the tribunal has given him a final warning and not the boot. He lives to “Nah lad, what's all this then” another day.

Meanwhile, Brian and Miranda are making the bedsprings zing, oh heavens, TMI!

Group	Meeting Time	Contact Details
Android Group	1 st Thurs pm	Martyn Radcliffe 07975 970088
Art Appreciation	1 st Wed pm	Tony Seward 01833 630050
Automotive	3 rd Tues am	Peter Colley 01833 695197
Birdwatching	3 rd Mon am	Andrew Lapworth 07962 038052
Board Games	2 nd Mon pm	Hazel McCallum 01833 316484
Book Group 2	2 nd Mon pm	Maggie Cleminson 01833 640801
Book Group 3 Room to Read	3 rd Wed am	Annie Clouston 01833 637091
Chess	2 nd Thurs pm	Diana Marks 07762 626912
Climate Solutions	1 st Thurs am	Kate Bailey 07867 683195
Cryptic Crossword	2 nd Wed 2pm	Sue Overton 07512 368884
Discussion	2 nd Fri am	Glen Howard 01833 631639
French Conversation	4 th Thurs pm	Stella Kirton 01388 488919
Gardening	1 st Fri pm	Julie Archer 07774 903377
Genealogy	1 st Thurs pm	INACTIVE
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 Tue 1.30pm	Mike Sweeting 07565 925412
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 am	Alan Kenwright 07731 122399
Pickleball	1 st & 3 rd Mon pm	Ruth Lapworth 07787 978696
Poetry	2 nd Wed am	Annie Clouston 01833 637091
Science & Technology	2 nd Mon am	Roy Tranter 01833 638288
Scrabble	2 nd Mon pm	Lilian Smith 01833 650628
Spanish Conversation	3 rd Thurs 10am	Michael Harris 07799 051389
Table Tennis	Every Fri 3pm	Peter Singer 07508 663998
Theatre	Varies	Elizabeth Formstone 07979 204212
Travel & day trips	Varies	Jane Mathieson 01388 710741
Understanding Classical Music	4 th Fri 10am	Bill Heyes 01833 640885
Wildflower Group	2 nd Wed 2pm	Anne Thomson 07928 594404
Wine Group	3 rd Tues pm	Tim Meacham 07847 182554
Yoga	Every Mon am	Angela Griffiths 01833 630170
Walking Groups		
Shorter walks 3-4 miles	4 th Mon pm	Liz Colley 01833 695197
Walking 4-6 miles	2 nd Tues 10am	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

Thurs 25 Apr 7.30pm	THEATRE – Hound of The Baskervilles Live on stage, Colin Baker (<i>Doctor Who</i>) and Terry Molloy (<i>The Archers</i>) play Holmes and Watson in a spectacular radio play.
Fri 26 Apr 7.00pm	SCREENING – Big Screen Musicals: An American in Paris (PG)
Sat 27 Apr 7.30pm	MUSICAL THEATRE – This Is Merseybeat Celebrate the sound of 60s Liverpool with this spectacular show.
Wed 1 May 6.45pm	LIVE SCREENING – Royal Opera House: Carmen
Fri 3 May 7.30pm	LIVE MUSIC – Paul Young: Behind the Lens
Sat 4 May 7.30pm	FOLK – The Pitmen Poets Reunion Tour
Fri 10 May 7.30pm	LIVE MUSIC – Hue and Cry Piano & Vocals Tour
Sat 11 May 2.00pm	FILM – One Life (PG) Starring Anthony Hopkins, Helena Bonham Carter and Johnny Flynn.
Sat 11 May 7.30pm	COMEDY – Tom Houghton: It's Not Ideal (14+)
Wed 15 May 7.00pm	THEATRE – Turrets Youth Theatre Seniors: Half-Remembered Dreams A collection of scenes from playwrights throughout history.
Thurs 16 May 7.00pm	SCREENING – Big Screen Musicals: 42nd Street (PG)
Sat 18 May 7.30pm	JAZZ – Alligator Gumbo Exciting 7-piece jazz band playing New Orleans swing/jazz.
Sun 19 May 2.00pm	CLASSICAL – Royal Northern Sinfonia: Summer Music An afternoon of classical music including Barber, Dvořák and Mozart.