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FORUM

September 2026

No 26/09

u3a

CHAIR'S LETTER

Dear Friends

I find myself wondering what to write, as it has been a quiet few weeks since last I wrote the Chair's letter for the September Forum. Only pleasant personal activities seem to have been on the agenda.



I have been on a five-day break to Snowdonia, including a first visit to Portmeirion. This has been on my bucket list for a while, as I remember the TV series *The Prisoner*, starring Patrick McGoochan, which was filmed at Portmeirion. The series followed a former British intelligence agent who, after abruptly resigning, is abducted and taken to a

mysterious coastal village known as The Village, where captors seek the reason for his resignation. It has earned critical acclaim and a lasting cult following. I remember the famous line 'I am not a number! I am a free man!'; stated by Patrick McGoochan as number six on numerous times. This statement I often feel is still relevant today!

My other lovely week was my sister's visit, indulging in material and craft shops, lunches out and a visit to Newcastle to try and sort a new oven and hob for me.

Lastly, yesterday I saw the matinee performance of Matthew Bourne's ballet *Car Man*. A passionate and powerful ballet with Matthew Bourne's signature dark moments. I have seen this ballet twice, and would go again, magnificent.

As ever looking forward to the next monthly meeting, especially as it is David Whinpenney talking about Edwin Lutyens – 'A Singular and Delightful Man'. Perfect for me, the Lutyens and Gertrude Jekyll partnership.

Bye for now

Julie

Cover photograph by Bryan Spark – Cauldron Snout

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! Photos should be credited, of high resolution in jpg format and sent separately.

Please limit submissions to 350-400 words (in a Word document) and 1 photo and send to the Forum Editor at forumeditor@teesdaleu3a.org.uk

DEADLINE for the next edition: 6pm Monday 12th October and next month's editor is Jane.

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: teesdale.u3asite.uk
- Asking a friend to collect one for you at the meeting - the cost is £2 on a 'first come first served' basis.
- Back copies are available online and also at Coffee and Chat events.

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MONTHLY MEETING

Report by Ian Reid

“Castles of County Durham” was the title of Keith Simpson’s talk. He began by asking what it was that made a castle? It is generally accepted that castles are fortifications built in stone and are usually associated with post Norman Conquest. Keith listed 7 castles in County Durham.

The following is a brief summary:

The largest is Durham. Originally an earth and timber fortress, the present stone castle was built in the 11th and 12th centuries. Much of the surviving castle is medieval although it has been altered considerably over the centuries. The castle might not be here today had the foundations not been stabilised at great expense in the 1920s. The magnificent 1st floor entrance, now in the Norman Gallery, was hidden for many years.

Barnard Castle, built from 1093, is the 2nd largest and is positioned over an important crossing of the Tees. The present properties and their plots on Horsemarket, were built from the 16th century onwards and encroach over the filled castle ditch and its margins. The castle last saw action during the “Rising of the North” in 1569 when George Bowes and 500 men held the castle for the King against 5,000 parliamentary forces. The siege lasted only 11 days but provided valuable time for the Royalist forces to assemble.

Bishopton Castle is an exceptionally well-preserved 12th century Norman motte and bailey. Roger de Conyers fortified the site around 1143. The motte was built up in layers probably of earth, clay and gravel, much of it taken from the ditch, and there was a timber structure on the top. Hundreds of workers would have been employed. As an aside, Keith mentioned that there were 3 mottes embroidered on the Bayeux Tapestry.

Bowes Castle was built on the site of an important Roman fort by orders of Henry II. Strategically important, it guarded Stainmore Pass. The main entrance leading to the massive three storey stone keep is on the 1st floor, similar to Durham.

Brancepeth Castle looks Norman but it isn’t. It began as a Norman fortified site progressively rebuilt into a substantial stone fortress. In the 14th century it became the principal seat of the Nevilles of Brancepeth. The Nevilles and the castle were connected with the rebels’ activities during the Rising of the North. The castle is currently being restored by the Dobson family.

Both Raby and Lumley castles were built in the Middle Ages and are associated with powerful Northern English families, the Vanes and the Nevilles. The

castles display similar quadrangular layouts, substantial towers and other architectural features that historians associate with the architect John Lewyn. As to why the castles fell into disrepair, Keith suggested that it was because they ceased to be useful.

NEXT MEETINGS AT THE WITHAM

22 October Gordon Hetherington: *Gertrude Bell, the Uncrowned Queen of Iraq*. Gertrude was brought up in Redcar as a member of a wealthy family of iron and steel manufacturers. She had an unusual career being educated at Oxford University at a time when there were few women undergraduates. She became the foremost woman mountaineer of her time and then started a series of epic adventures in the deserts of the Ottoman Empire, which led to her becoming the leading expert on the Middle East. In WW1 she was attached to the British forces during the invasion of Mesopotamia and was heavily involved in the formation of the new state of Iraq. She died aged 58 in Bagdad.

26 November FOOLS GOLD: Fools Gold are a duo of acoustic musicians, Steve and Carol Robson. They will present a themed show entitled 'Old King Coal' – a series of songs and stories all linked to the miners and mining communities of the north-east. Audiences can expect a funny, fascinating and poignant selection of tales and tunes.

AS USUAL THERE WILL BE NO MONTHLY MEETING IN DECEMBER but there will be...

This year's u3a Christmas lunch at Headlam Hall, Headlam DL2 3HA on Thursday 3rd December 12.30 for 1pm. Cost for either 2 or 3 courses, £42pp or £46pp to include a glass of wine or soft drink.

The venue requires a seating plan - if you wish to be seated with specific people Sue will need all your names; if you don't mind who you are seated with, let Sue know. She will endeavour to produce a table plan!

Payment can be made by BACS to:- Teesdale u3a, Sort Code: 20 - 83 -73, Account No: 03778576. Reference: XMAS plus your surname.

NB: This account is not the same as the one for your subscription payment!

Cheques and/or cash can be paid at the monthly meeting or sent to Sue at: 5 Cecil Road, Barnard Castle DL12 8AL 07512 368884 sueoverton@hotmail.com

WORKSHOP REPORT BY KATE BAILEY

Fabric recycling, being Creative with Textile Remnants



We met at the Guide HQ and met our tutor Joan, a member of the Upper Eden u3a. Joan has been an enthusiastic collector and 'stitcher' of fabric remnants for years and has founded two 'creative textile' groups in Kirkby Stephen.

Joan started with a 'show and tell' of the work of some of her group members and a few of the workshop group had examples to show of previous work. She provided bags of materials, threads, oddments, buttons and ribbons to get everyone started, and some had brought their own materials, pins and needles. No need for instruction said Joan, just pick fabrics and colours that you like and

make a collage with simple stitching. The chatter soon died down as everyone became engrossed in their creations, even the people who had never done anything similar started to gain confidence and enjoy the process.

Two hours flew by and, as we cleared up, it was fascinating to see that each person had made something attractive and colourful and quite different from any other piece of work on the table. The general conclusion was that we all enjoyed the workshop and would like to do more 'creative textile' work. Thanks to Joan it was a very sociable learning experience and we hope to organise another opportunity for u3a members to experiment with textile 'art' in the near future.

FUTURE WORKSHOPS AND SOCIAL EVENTS

Saturday 26th September, 10-12am, MORE ABOUT AI, Pete Redgrave, at Guide HQ.

Saturday 21st November, 11-2.00 pm, (Preparing and eating) A Winter Vegetarian lunch with friends

Friday 12th December, 6-8pm, CHEESE AND WINE PAIRINGS, at Andalusia, Galgate, Barnard Castle.

GROUP REPORTS

ANDROID PHONE GROUP - Report by Martyn Radcliffe

Once again after a summer hiatus the Android Phone group faithfuls gathered with a couple of new people swelling the ranks.

We looked at a number of subjects which included:

1. With the advent of the phasing out of standard landlines, mobiles are now becoming the only home phone. We went through how to switch off the sound on notifications etc. and reduce the ringing sound.
2. The need for basic phone security was reiterated with pin numbers and other measures discussed.
3. How to switch on WiFi calling was run through for mobiles at home.
4. Latest scams were discussed. LinkedIn offer of a job and the AI generated conversation bot that claims it is phoning about mis-sold car finance.
5. Suspected Spam / Potential Fraud – phones now identify potential calls that may be scams. We looked at blocking then deleting them from the call log. If number not identified and not marked as spam using websites such as "who called me" are useful.

The next meeting will look more closely at Settings and also what criteria should you use for selecting a new phone.

ART APPRECIATION GROUP - Report by Tony Seward

The Bayeux Tapestry

Ahead of the British Museum exhibition, we looked at this unique work from three different angles. An antiquarian bookseller, Tom Ayling, usefully set out the historical context by telling the dramatic story of how it could easily have been lost several times over the last 900 years. It was only when French antiquarians in the 18th century began to study and publish drawings of the tapestry that it began to emerge from the neglect of centuries. It was nearly destroyed during the Revolution, but as the 19th century progressed scholarly studies began to accumulate. The London Society of Antiquaries played an important role in bringing it to a wider public by commissioning their artist Charles Stothard, in 1816, to make detailed watercolours of every scene, which were then engraved for publication. His version was so accurate that it was still being used as a reference until well into the 20th century. Finally, with the arrival of colour photography, it could at last be reproduced in print for mass publication.



Second, Professor Michael Lewis, Head of Portable Antiquities at the BM, whose work over many years was crucial in bringing the exhibition to fruition, and Dr Emily Ward, gave us an authoritative overview of the tapestry – who commissioned it, where, how and by whom it was made (there are no final answers to this), and a scene-by-scene introduction to the narrative and the political significance of each episode.

It is noteworthy that Harold is portrayed as noble and courageous, for example when he carries a man on his back through the treacherous quicksands below Mont St Michel.

Above: Harold (with hawk) sets out on his expedition to Brittany.

Finally, a young American scholar took us through the Latin narrative that is embroidered along the top border. This identifies the main characters in each scene and gives a simple explanation of what is happening, much like the running narrative in early comic books. The language is rough-and-ready medieval, not classical, Latin, and is full of fascinating clues as to the linguistic background of the makers. These clearly show influences from Old English (Anglo-Saxon) and Norman French which distort the Latin text.



What is going on here between the priest and ÆLFGYVA? Nobody knows.

One obvious example is the use of the Old English letter **Æ**, another the spelling of William's name as 'WILGELMUM' where the 'G' reflects Old English usage, standing for the 'y' sound which would be written as 'i' in Latin.

The October meeting will be a 'show and tell' session, where members are invited to bring along a favourite artefact and say what it means to them.

BIRDWATCHING - Report by Andrew Lapworth

August 2026 field trip to Bolton-on-Swale Lake and Scorton Lakes

After the recent July heatwave it was a relief that our August trip enjoyed a pleasant warm and dry visit to these former gravel pits near Catterick. Thirteen of us met at the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust lake near Bolton-on-Swale which has a small hide and larger viewing screen. This summer up to six

Black-crowned Night Herons* had been seen using the large Willow trees as a roost and we hoped to see them. These small migratory herons do mainly feed at night, so we would have to be lucky to see them during daylight hours; needless to say we did not have that luck!

Despite the herons not showing we did see a good number of species, including (for some) a Kingfisher, some large flocks of Tufted Duck, Mute Swans, and a rare **Red-crested Pochard** (female). Along the hedgerow between the hides were large numbers of warblers actively feeding in preparation for their migrations south, and Lapwings and Curlews were in good numbers on the opposite fields. In the owl nest box at the base of the Osprey platform we could occasionally see the resident **Barn Owl** as it peered out.

After a short stop at the local cafe we then went on to the nearby Scorton Lakes area. At the first lake we were entertained by the **Great-crested Grebes**; one of this year's humbug-striped chicks was constantly begging its parent for food and we eventually saw it receiving several small fish caught by the parent bird.



En route to the next lake we watched a Sparrowhawk being mobbed by a gull, Buzzards, and in the opposite direction three Jays made brief appearances.

From the viewing areas over the next lake we had extensive views of large flocks of birds; quite a spectacle. In addition to the Greylag and Canada geese flocks there was a large flock of the smaller **Barnacle Geese** that are a resident feature of the Scorton area. Little Egrets were outnumbered by **Great White Egrets** and it was nice to compare their sizes. Overhead we had good numbers of Sand Martins and Swallows. At this time of the year many wader species that breed in more northerly latitudes stop off in the UK to feed and put on weight for their long migration to southern Europe and Africa. Sure enough, we found three very active **Ruff**, a **Green Sandpiper** and a **Common Sandpiper**. Three **Snipe** gave good views and while we were watching these Jim found two **Yellow Wagtails** (we double-checked these were not the more local Grey Wagtails we see on the Tees and its beck; Greys have yellow bellies too and many people can mistake the two species).

Nearly 40 species were seen at these local sites. Scorton Lakes is a fantastic local nature site and public amenity. Its future is currently under threat by a proposed luxury lakeside housing development. There is an active group trying to prevent the loss of this amenity that needs as many people as possible to object to the proposed development:
<https://scortonlakes.org>

* The Black-crowned Night Herons at the lake were featured on BBC News.

ROOM TO READ BOOK GROUP- Review by Ann Whitfield

The Glassmaker by Tracey Chevalier

This novel by the author of *Girl with a Pearl Earring* has an unusual structure in that it features the same individuals of a family but places them in different time periods set over about 500 years. The conceit is that time within Venice and its lagoon 'slips' as a skimmed stone slips over water, and people live on through many centuries, seemingly oblivious to historical change. Elsewhere in the world, time continues to progress as we understand it.

One of the pleasures of this book is that it conjures up images of Venice, especially for those who know it. It also contains a wealth of historical information, detailing the fluctuating fortunes of the port of Venice starting in the Renaissance era and skipping through the centuries, pausing to see

how the inhabitants of Murano were affected by major historical events such as the bubonic plague, war, the advent of Napoleon and all the way through to Covid 19.

There was praise for the quality of description, and we were all impressed by the detailed research which had gone into the processes involved in the craft of creating and marketing of Murano's famous glass products. In the first instance only men who were born on the island of Murano were permitted to work in glass, and the methods were closely guarded secrets. Women were not allowed to take part in the glassmaking process, and nor were outsiders.

Over the centuries, economic necessity and a gradual opening up of what had been a closed society lead to the changing roles of the women in Murano. Orsola Rosso, the central character, saves her family from ruin and learns and adapts her craft as a glass bead maker, while developing her business skills over the centuries. She falls in love, and marries, but we felt the characterisation was rather one dimensional and like the other women in the book, she is not a likeable person!

Overall, we agreed it was well written and easy to read, but there is a lot of repetition and a lot of detail could have been edited out. Our impression was of a book so dominated by factual information that it was more a work of non fiction than a novel. Characters and plot were secondary to a historical account.

Rounded up, the scores for discussion were 4/5 and for recommendation to a friend 3/5.

CLIMATE SOLUTIONS GROUP - Report by Kate Bailey

We were delighted to welcome Rob, a local resident who is organising a screening in Teesdale of the 'Public Climate Briefing' film. We have not had an opportunity to see the film locally, the nearest screening being in Hexham a while ago. Several members of the group have volunteered to assist at the event and we will publicise the date and venue once they are known.

The trailer can be viewed at: <https://www.nebriefing.org/the-film>

We discussed the challenging issue of fabric, clothing and textile recycling and were interested to learn that the fashion and textile industries are facing new sustainability regulations. The upcoming Digital Product Passport (DPP), will push brands to provide detailed product information throughout the entire lifecycle. Advanced textile mills now weave micro-RFID (radio-frequency identification) chips into smart yarns to enable automated sorting and global tracking of waste materials.

[For a detailed list of local recycling facilities, see our information sheet on the Teesdale u3a website 'This and That' page]

Welcome News:

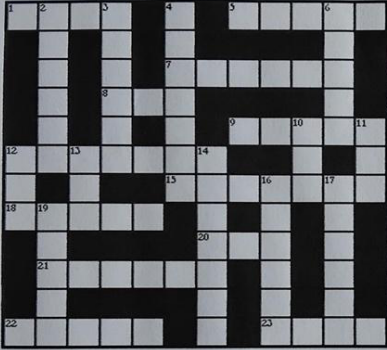
- A recent Reuters article calculates that the UK clean energy economy generates over £100billion per year, supports 1million jobs and has attracted over £100billion in private investment since 2024. Unfortunately, this June during the heatwaves, 70% media coverage did not mention climate change at all;
- Plug-in solar panels are to be made available for home use in the UK in the next few months. They can be installed on a balcony, fence, shed or patio, and plugged into a standard domestic socket, provided your existing wiring system is safe;
- Discarded sheets and linens from luxury hotels, including the Ritz-Carlton chain, are being diverted from landfill and made into high-end clothing items including shirts, dresses and jackets;
- England's largest private landscape and habitat restoration project has been launched in Northumberland, on the Emblehope estate. Rewetting around 800 acres of drained peatland will lock up carbon and reduce flooding, with golden eagle, crane and curlew expected to return;
- Sustainable, recyclable paper and cardboard packaging is being used by Amazon to eliminate single-use plastic delivery bags. Their goal is to be net-zero carbon across their operations by 2040.

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD GROUP - Report by Sue Overton

Our first meeting after the summer break did not go as well as expected. I thought we would begin with a warm-up of an anagram only crossword, usually the easiest clue type. Unfortunately, in my haste, I had not read the instructions! And, I did not have the answers!

So, six brains struggled for nearly an hour to solve the fiendish puzzle before giving up and heading for the coffee and plate of biscuits. I am including a copy of the crossword with this report and if any of our readers can solve it, I would be extremely pleased to hear from you.

Anagram Crossword #1



http://www.anagrammy.com/

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INSTRUCTIONS:
 Each clue is for an anagram of the word to be filled in, not the word itself. For instance "Arboreal apes (7)" would be SOBBING rather than GIBBONS, and "Valleys (5)" could be any of DEALS, LADES, LEADS and SLADE (but not DALES).

The clues across (→) are an anagram of the clues down (↓), and the solutions across are an anagram of the solutions down.

→ → →

1. Helps (4)
5. Title of Spanish fellow (5)
7. Lager (5)
8. Food served (5)
9. Matured (5)
12. Intertwine (7)
15. Sycophantic (7)
18. Slimmed (5)
20. Epoch (5)
21. Rampaged (6)
22. Stake a blow (5)
23. Beach (4)

=

↓ ↓ ↓

2. Forward freefall (6)
3. Is ascertained (6)
4. Most like the bog (7)
6. Prongs (5)
10. Deep (5)
11. Wilt (5)
12. Hawk (5)
13. Pitch (5)
14. Humbly worships (7)
16. Consecrate (6)
17. Mentied (6)
19. A man polled (5)

With brain strain we continued with a relatively easier Guardian crossword.....answers via Danword when time began to run out!

Our next meeting at 2pm in the Guide HQ is on Wednesday 14th October, all welcome including beginners.

DISCUSSION GROUP - Report by Glen Howard

Members had found it very difficult to find happy stories in the news, but we did manage to find some. Topics discussed included: shooting/crime; time travel; unfit servicemen; Trump; 'private citizens'; and memorable wedding stories.

New members are always welcome so do contact me if you are interested in joining us. We meet on the second Friday of each month. Our next meetings will be on **October 9th and November 13th**.

FAMILY HISTORY INTEREST GROUP - Report by Alan Swindale

Ten members joined **July's** meeting for Alan's demonstration of FamilySearch's new feature – Full Text Search.

The Church of Latter Day Saints (LDS) has millions of microfilms in a vault in Granite Mountain, Utah, which are not indexed and published to provide easy access. Instead FamilySearch has employed 'Artificial Intelligence (AI)' to scan those images and convert them to text.

Using the new feature I have been able, for example, to locate property deeds in Ireland, genealogies in the USA, burial register entries in Bishopwearmouth and wills in Cheshire, all accompanied by a copy of the original image, the AI transcribed version of the image (less than perfect!), an AI summary of the text and a citation reference. Filters on Year, Location and Record Type are usually necessary to reduce the number of results returned to manageable numbers. Wild cards (? and *) can be used though I have found them unreliable. The use of + and – immediately preceding a word in the search box can also focus the results.

Many records that the LDS have been given access to were made available subject to restrictions on access. These can only be viewed at FamilySearch centres such as at Newton Aycliffe or at Affiliate centres such as the Northumberland and Durham Family History Society in Newcastle. For convenience such records can be filtered out of the search results but they may contain a nugget of information that would make the trip worthwhile.

Record sets that are already indexed, eg parish records, census records etc, are NOT presented by Full Text Search. For these it is necessary to use the familiar search tools on FamilySearch.

I have found Full Text Search a valuable extension to the facilities available on FamilySearch but not a replacement for conventional directed search methods. For these come to next month's talk!

Eleven members were present for the talk in **August** on Family History Basics: Directed Search.

The idea of 'Directed Search' is that, instead of seeing what goodies the Family History websites (Ancestry, FamilySearch etc) throw back at you when you enter (for example) a name and a date, you should rather

- i) Decide what is the first piece of information you want to know
- ii) Decide which data set should contain the information
- ii) Interrogate the data set.

Then move on to the next search.

This prevents the researcher being distracted by information which, though interesting, is not what they were wanting to know. It also improves familiarity with the basis data sets on which family history research is founded. The researcher regains control over the process. It may seem slow but it is, usually, sure.

One member offered for the amusement of others an extract from the 1861 census: A George Brown of Galgate, 50, gave his occupation as "Secretary to South Durham & Lancashire Union Railway and Eden Valley Railway – Clerk to Teesdale Poor Law Union & Superintendent Registrar". A busy man! He had also been a barrister and lay preacher and founded the Stockton and Darlington Times.

September's talk will be on *Family History Basics: Searching –Where to Look*. This will be followed by a 'Help your Neighbour' practical session. October's meeting will be at **13:30 on Thursday 8th of October** at Enterprise House.

GARDENING GROUP - Report by Kate Keen and Julie Archer



In September the gardening group travelled to Thorp Perrow Arboretum just outside Bedale in North Yorkshire.

Thorp Perrow is the most important Arboretum in the north of England and was created by Colonel Sir Leonard Ropner, it was developed into a visitor attraction by his son Sir John Ropner and Sir Henry Ropner is the current custodian. Thorp Perrow covers 100 acres and is home to 5 National Plant Collections and has 67 Champion Trees.

The site has an avenue of lime trees forming one of the national collections. There is a collection of stunning hydrangeas and a wildflower meadow. There are numerous paths around the park with lakes and small islands with quaint bridges to cross. By Kate's Island there is a charming carved tree. Nearby there is a stone acorn with a bench to observe the view.

Set within the woodland is a bird of prey and mammal centre. We could look at the meerkats and pygmy goats and were able to wander through a small enclosure with wallabies. The birds of prey include numerous owls from around the world as well as vultures and hawks. We were able to enjoy a flying display with a pair of male caracara birds, an owl and a falcon.

The tea rooms were pleasant and served a range of refreshments.

It was a windy day and around 2.30pm we were instructed to leave the arboretum as a tree had damaged a car and it was considered too dangerous to stay under the trees. Our driver took the coach a scenic route home so as not to cut short our day out.

On **Friday 2nd October** we will return to having talks at Stainton Village Hall. Our speaker is Nick Smith



the Show Director of the Harrogate Flower Show with his talk “The Show Must Go On”.

GEOLOGY GROUP - Report by Bob Tuddenham

Meeting on July 27th

There were talks on two very different areas of Geology in our July meeting.

In the first half, Les Knight gave a fascinating talk about glacial erratics and the introduction of a database recording these boulders that are found across large areas of the UK. An erratic is a glacially deposited rock differing from the type of rock native to the area in which it rests. There are several granite erratics in the Barnard Castle area, the most famous of which is probably the Great Stone found in Deepdale. This was transported from the Shap area in Cumbria over Stainmore during the most recent ice age some 11000 years ago.

The recognition of the glacial origin of erratics is a classic example of the tension in the mid 19th century between the introduction of modern concepts of geology and the established belief in the biblical flood. In the 1830s Louis Agassiz recognised the clear evidence of past wholesale glaciation in Switzerland and after a trip to Scotland, William Buckland and some other leading British geologists were also convinced of the impact of glaciation. Much information about the extent and direction of glaciation can be derived from erratics deposited during the most recent ice age and earlier ice ages. Les is currently compiling a database of these boulders which will be invaluable for future reference and research.

In the second half Bob Tuddenham gave a brief talk about UNESCO Geoparks in the UK. There are twelve UNESCO Geoparks, the nearest being the North Pennines, an area of amazing geology. The geopark concept is much more than just geology and seeks to promote sustainable economic development through ecotourism and involves the local community and its geological, cultural and historical heritage. The geopark status imposes no restrictions on development and planning but is about promoting an outstanding geological area by encouraging local authorities and local organisations to work together. The Black Country Geopark in the West Midlands is another most successful example of this. One of the potential drawbacks to obtaining UNESCO status is the substantial cost of validation and then the revalidation process required every four years. Two UK Geoparks have withdrawn from the UNESCO scheme for this reason.

Our next meeting will be at The Witham on **Monday September 28th at 10 am**. All are welcome to join us. Please contact the convenor for details.

(THE RELAUNCHED) HOLIDAY GROUP - Report by Kate Keen

The relaunched holiday group now has a bespoke UK tour for 2027. Brief details are included here, further information brochure and booking forms are available from Kate Keen.

The Historic Houses, Heritage & Gardens of Oxfordshire & the Cotswolds.

Departing 11 June 2027 by coach from Barnard Castle. Four nights accommodation in the 4 star Oxford Belfry Hotel on a half board basis. This tour has a busy itinerary including visits en route to and returning from the hotel.

We will see Hardwick Hall & Gardens, Hidcote Manor Garden, Upton House & Gardens, Oxford guided walking tour, Ashmolean Museum, Blenheim Palace and Wentworth House.

Price £814 per person for shared rooms, single room supplement £119, does not include entrance costs for the National Trust properties. Completed booking forms with £100 deposit per person to Kate Keen by mid-December.

LUNCH CLUB - Report by Kate Keen

In July the lunch group returned to the Crosskeys Inn at Eppleby.

We had pre ordered our meals with the most popular starter being the twice baked cheddar cheese and spinach soufflé with home made focaccia, this was delicious. The chosen main courses included fillet of chalk stream trout, fish pie and rigatoni pasta with all being well received. Most of us even managed dessert with a variety of options being available.

A special mention goes to Claire at the Crosskeys who made sure we had outstanding service, she made a note of who was sitting where so she could bring the meals straight to the member. We all received our meals at the same time. At the end of the meal Claire totted up each individual bill and

came over to us directly for payment. Exceptional service and lovely food. I can highly recommend this venue.

NEEDLECRAFT - Report by Glen Howard

The hot weather appears to have gone and it was very pleasant working on our projects this month. Knitting and crochet are always popular as they are easy to transport and we can chat whilst working. Never possible to listen to all conversations at once, but the Bayeaux tapestry came in for a lot of comment. Several of us had seen it in Bayeaux at various times in the past (sometimes distant past). NHS waiting times came in for criticism, urgent referrals taking a long time before an appointment came, non-urgent were months away.

Our next meeting will be on **Monday 5th October**. New members are always welcome so do give me a call if you would like to join us.

PHILOSOPHY GROUP

Report by Ruth Sansom and Christine Price

Jean-Paul Sartre (1905 – 1980) was born and educated in Paris, studied and taught philosophy, was conscripted in the second World War, captured and was in a prisoner of war camp for nearly a year.

'Man, being condemned to be free, carries the weight of the whole world on his shoulders; he is responsible for the world and for himself as a way of being.' **Being and Nothingness**, (1943).

His most important works were *Being and Nothingness* (1943) in which he argued that people are free (a surprising concept in occupied France!) meaning that as human beings aren't designed to be anything in particular (as for example a penknife is), we can choose to be and do and think.

'Existence precedes essence' was his famous saying and is the basis of Sartre's philosophy of Existentialism.

Simone de Beauvoir (1908-1986) studied Philosophy at the Sorbonne and was closely associated with Sartre and Existentialism.

In ***The Second Sex*** (1949), she asserted that historically, philosophical knowledge was by default 'male' and that the female was therefore regarded as the 'Other'.

For Aristotle, full humanity was explicitly male. He called women's deliberative faculty 'inoperative', or unauthoritative ('she can reason but she cannot command'). Kant is said to have stated that women who studied science ran the risk of growing beards - and that would 'weaken the charm with which she exercised her great power over the other sex'.

De Beauvoir distinguished between sex (biological characteristics) and gender (based on social constructs, standards). She said 'One is not *born* but *becomes* a woman', so women must overcome the various social and psychological barriers to equality with men and, in Existentialist terms, be free to choose and create meaning for their own lives.

De Beauvoir has been criticised by Marxist, Liberal and Postmodern Feminists for failing to acknowledge inequalities for other groups (e.g. based on race and class). Nevertheless, her thoughts about the repression of women set the ground-rules for much Feminist philosophy.

Come and join our **Philosophy group** – we meet at Enterprise House on the 4th Tuesday of the month. All welcome.

PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP - Report by Alan Kenwright

In September the photography group made a return visit to Beamish Museum, partly because there is too much there to cover in just a single visit, and partly because the tickets bought for our previous visit are valid for a year! The weather was cloudy with intermittent sunshine, which made for more interesting photo opportunities, and the museum was busy despite it being "back to school" week. Maybe the existence of "Baker Days" played some part, but there were also a lot of seniors and pre-school children, so lots of opportunities for candid "street" shots, but more challenging to get well composed, uncluttered pictures of the buildings, etc. Despite the challenges, we thoroughly enjoyed our visit and came away with some images we could be happy with.

Photographs by Ian Royston and Alan Kenwright.



Our next outing will be to Robin Hood's Bay on **Tuesday, 6th October.**

POETRY GROUP - Report by Annie Clouston

Apologies to Robert Alabaster who should have been accredited the author of last month's report.

This month's theme was REVOLUTION! - a tricky one for which to source material. It called for thinking outside of the cake tin! Interestingly, a disproportionate number of findings were in the form of song, that great conduit for protest.

We started with ***Annus Mirabilis***, Philip Larkin's lament that the sexual revolution "Between the end of the Chatterley ban/ And the Beatles' first LP..." that came too late for him. You can hear it spoken by Larkin here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5LI3XXPOW_k

Two poems about the fight against slavery in the USA followed: the first a marching song of African-American soldiers from the Civil War, credited to Bob Dylan (the music) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5_KHDWpnDjg, the second a poem written by Eloise Greenfield about the courageous ***Harriet Tubman*** and her work to bring slaves to freedom in the North.

Who knew that Robert Frost could be a bit of a wag? Well, here is proof in his satirical verse ***A Semi-Revolution***. The trouble with a total revolution?/ (Ask any reputable Rosicrucian)/ Is that it brings the same class up on top..." (you'll need to look up Rosicrucian to get it). ***Prayer for Revolutionary Love*** by Denise Levertov needs thinking about, but knowing something of Levertov's personal story of radical activism that took precedence over her relationships gives some clarity.

How incredible is the voice and passion of Dick Gaughan? Hearing him sing ***The World Turned Upside Down*** by Leon Rosselson took me back to Whitby Folk Festival in the early eighties when Gaughan would not leave a dry eye in the house. See it on

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PFLTtyY6hc4>.

Two poems from Russia 1917 – the Bolshevik Revolution – reveal the bitterness of two women poets: the first ***What Have We Done To it?*** by Zinaida Gippius who abandoned the country and the second ***Green Island*** by Anna Akhmatova who berates those who left.

Our spirits thoroughly laid low with the misery of it all, Roger McGough came to the rescue with his fabulous poem ***At lunchtime. A story of love.*** This gives rise to a fantasy of re-enactment by the bus-pass fraternity on the Scarlet Band out of Barnard Castle where a sudden application of the brakes might lead to close encounters of an amorous kind that can only happen if you think the world is going to end at lunchtime. This was very cheering. This poem is reproduced in full on pages 36-37. Please note the punctuation is as it is in the original. McGough is original!

RUMMIKUB GROUP - Report by Celia Chapple

July is a busy month for some so we had a small group of 5 players for Rummikub. This number gave us a table of 3 players on the standard Rummikub (numbers) board, plus two who bravely started with the Rummikub (word). Two of these players were determined to win a game this month after being thwarted in June.

The good news is that they did! On the table of 3, David won the first game and Deborah won two games overall. She can no longer call herself a beginner! After tea and biscuits, the smaller group led Sue to win Rummikub (word) whilst Celia won a Rummikub (numbers) game.

An interesting note about Rummikub: it was invented by Ephraim Hertzano, a Romanian-born Jew who emigrated to Israel after World War II. He hand-made the first sets in the backyard of his home, and sold these sets door-to-door and in small shops. It was licensed to other countries and became Israel's best-selling export game.

Thank you to Elizabeth and David for their hospitality with a view of their colourful garden.

If you would like to try out Rummikub, then please let Julie or Kate know. Have a look at our group web page: [Rummikub Group - Teesdale u3a](#)

SCRABBLE GROUP - Report by Ray Thompson

We met at Judith and Phil's house again for this month's Scrabble meeting.

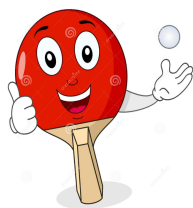
There were 8 of us and as the weather was fine one of the groups played in the garden. Team 1 consisted of Kate, Monica, Jeanette and Ray, Team

2 were Paula, Judith, Phil and Regina. Kate won her game with a score of 170 including a 7 letter word LETTERS for 69 points. Paula won her game with a score of 188 points.

We stopped for refreshments of tea, coffee, and homemade chocolate mint ganache and shortbread biscuits. We started playing the second round with the two winners and highest runner ups, so Kate, Paula, Regina and Ray played, which Regina won with a score of 239 points including a 7 letter word ADVISING for 74. The other group was made up of Phil, Judith, Monica and Jeanette, with Phil winning this game with 263 points.

The next game will be on **12th October** at Jeanette's. Thank you to Judith for the delicious refreshments and for hosting this month's meeting. Please call 07790 407152 for any enquiries.

TABLE TENNIS GROUP - Report by Peter Singer



In preparation for a forthcoming holiday in Spain, your reporter has been brushing up his very rusty *poco de espanol*. The trip will mean missing a couple of our U3A table tennis sessions, which will be a great shame but there's a price to pay for everything, isn't there? Anyway, might there be the chance of playing a few games out there, just to keep one's hand in? So, "*juegas al tenis de mesa?*" (do you play table tennis?) would be a good start and maybe "*he dejado me bate en casa*" (I've left my bat at home). After that, it might become a little more tricky. "*Buen tiro*" (good shot) would be okay, but "how on earth did I miss that?" or "whoops! I seem to have hit that under the table" or even "I think I've just put my back out" could present problems, even with the help of Google Translate.

Perhaps discretion really is the better part of valour and table tennis is best left for a return to Barney. It might take a week or two to get back into the swing after a break but at least communication doesn't require the bat in one hand and a book (or phone) in the other – which would make serving somewhat problematic. Also, the enjoyment of the game is much enhanced by the elegantly witty repartee that unfailingly accompanies our play (if only – more like grunts and groans and occasional outbursts of hysterical laughter but one can dream).

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.

UNDERSTANDING CLASSICAL MUSIC - Report by Ian Royston

20th Century Greats Part 4 with Howard Goodall – Cole Porter

Once again in this series, Goodall's persistent theme holds: classical music had drifted into a narrow and increasingly inaccessible cul-de-sac, too esoteric and avant-garde for all but its most devoted followers, even as popular music was often dismissed as vulgar and banal by comparison. Goodall's argument throughout the four episodes is that it was popular composers and songwriters — Herrmann, Bernstein, The Beatles, and here Cole Porter — who kept the older musical ideas alive and accessible, effectively becoming the "new classics" of the century while academic classical music retreated from its audience.

Cole Porter will best be remembered for three things: he wrote great tunes, he wrote clever and often risqué lyrics, and he wrote both together, seemingly as one act. He found his winning formula on Broadway in the late 1920s and rode it for three decades. Where the theatrical tradition had rested heavily on the 3/4 time of European dance and operetta, Porter drew instead on the 4/4 pulse and syncopated rhythms of blues and jazz — a shift in feel, as much as metre, that gave his songs a loose, conversational swing quite unlike the stiffer dance forms that had dominated the musical stage before him, and which shaped Broadway song-writing for decades after.

Goodall's other key point concerns harmony. Broadway convention held that happy songs belonged in major keys — cheerful sentiment / cheerful harmony. Porter broke that rule repeatedly, setting witty, often ebullient lyrics in minor keys and threading them with a progressive, chromatic use of semitones that unsettled the expected mood even as the words stayed light. This deliberate mismatch became one of his signatures.

His lyrics, too, were not just clever in isolation: his gift lay in developing and varying a song's central idea across successive verses, rather than repeating a fixed formula. Songs such as "You're the Top," "Anything Goes" and "Let's Do It" show this catalogue-like, ever-extending wit in full flow, each verse topping the last with a fresh, often outrageous comic rhyme — and each carried along by that same syncopated, jazz-inflected rhythm.

In Part 2, we began with a brief look at three families of instrument: bowed and plucked strings such as the vielle, viol and lute; early flutes and other wind instruments; and the beginnings of the pipe organ. We were reminded that the organ, which took recognisable shape in the seventeenth century, still needed to be pumped by hand or foot well into the twentieth.

Last month we'd had a first glimpse of the theorbo, the largest of the lute family — around fourteen strings and up to two metres tall. This month Brandon Acker explored its origins, construction and repertoire, and explained that it's really two instruments in one: a fretted neck, played much like a modern guitar, for chords and melody, and a second, longer extended neck of open bass strings, plucked with the thumb, that functions rather like the bottom octave of a harp. This dual nature is beautifully demonstrated in the campanella technique — spreading a scale across several strings, some fretted and some open, so that each note keeps ringing under the next, producing an overlapping, bell-like shimmer

Our next meeting is at Startforth Community Centre on **Friday 25 September at 10:00.**

WILDFLOWER GROUP - Report by Anne Thomson

Our August outing was postponed due to the intense heat, but the postponement did not take place as everyone was otherwise engaged!

Several recces of various locations were carried out to find a decent amount to identify and this proved to be The Tees Railway Path from Romaldkirk towards Middleton-in-Teesdale.

Wednesday, 9th September was predicted to be the best day of the week weather wise and it was. Nine of us went on a wild flower and berry identification stroll and were amazed at the number of wild flowers, 33 -

pleasure of floating about a bit cannot be underestimated.

Our next sessions are on **26th September and 24th October from 4-5pm**. Call me for swimming information 07988625738 and email Sue to book sueoverton@hotmail.com.

WINE GROUP TOO - Report by Martyn Ratcliffe



The eagerly awaited August meeting was held at Julie's. She had chosen to showcase Spanish wines which proved very interesting, informative and delicious along with Spanish nibbles. A good time was had by all.

Julie had sourced the wines from Booths, Lidl and Sainsbury

Sherry

Williams & Humbler Collection Oloroso, 2011, 19.5%, £11.95. Palamino grape. A mature, mellow sherry with noticeable nutty flavours. *Food Pairing* – Well aged cheeses.

Sparkling

Cava Jaume Serra Vintage, 2022, 11.5%, £8.49. Chardonnay, Paradela, Macabeo and Xarel grapes. Fresh notes of white and citrus fruits. *Food pairing* – Sausages & nuts, cured cheeses and baked fish.

Rose

Sainsburys Barrihuelo Rioja Rosado, 2025, 13%, £9.00. Tempranillo, Garnacha, Mazuelo, and Viura grapes. Hints of strawberries, cherry and lemon peel. *Food pairing* – Tapas, aperitifs and risotto dishes

White

Mucho Mas. Non-Vintage, 12.5% £7.49. Tempranillo, Garnacha (Grenache), and Syrah (Shiraz) grapes. Tropical fruit with vanilla. *Food pairing* – Pasta, paella, Tapas, grilled fish, smoked hams and cheeses,

Most Wanted Albarino, 2023, 13%, £12.75. Albarino grape. Tropical fruit peach and grapefruit. *Food pairing* – Seafood, asparagus & Goats cheese

Red

Mucho Mas Vino Tinto. Non Vintage, 13%, £7.49. Tempranillo, Garnacha (Grenache), and Syrah (Shiraz) grapes. Fruity, mineral notes with cocoa. *Food pairing* – Tapas, cured cheeses, lean meats and game dishes.

Hacienda Uvanis Garnacha Old Vines, 2022, 14%, £8.50. Garnacha (grenache) grape. Red fruits. *Food pairing* – Red meats, game & cheese

The scores on the doors were two wines garnering joint first with 55 out of the available 70 points -Albarino & Much Mas Vino Tinto.

Our next meeting will be on **29th September** at Martyn and Karen's.



WALKING GROUPS



SHORTER WALKS - Report by Liz Colley

COTHERSTONE TO BARNARD CASTLE



The first part of our outing was to catch the bus to Cotherstone. Since Weardale Travel now use smaller capacity buses on this route, I limited the walk to 14 members which did mean some members were disappointed not to be on the walk. However, 14 proved to be exactly the right number, as we left Galgate all the seats were taken and two more passengers got on at the Market Cross.

There are several routes from Cotherstone to Barnard Castle, our route was to take the Tees Valley Railway path which we joined right on the edge of Cotherstone. Climbing 30 shallow steps takes you onto the old railway line. Following this path, we crossed over the route of the new water pipe. Work has been completed on this section and in another year, it will probably not be obvious at all.

Where the route of the railway line stops, we joined the footpath heading towards Lartington, this takes you underneath another railway line. One of our members told us he had used the railway as a child to get to school. We then took the footpath towards Pecknell Farm and rather than continuing over the fields as we have previously, we entered Pecknell Woods. The footpath runs parallel to Scur Beck. It is a lovely walk for the initial section, but when our walk leader reced the walk she discovered that the footpath deteriorates and becomes nearly impassable for a group. So she directed us up to the tarmac lane which leads us back to Lartington Lane.

Once past Tees Cottage the lane runs parallel to the Tees and opposite Flatts Wood we observed some children had entered the river from Flatts Wood and were making their way upstream. One of our sharp-eyed walkers spotted her granddaughter in the river and left her in no doubt she should get out of the water immediately! 'No names, no pack drill'

Many thanks to Carole for her thorough recce and for leading the walk.

4-6 MILE WALKING GROUP - Report by Mary Barnard

Eight of us met in the Demesne Mill Picnic car park to walk an easy 5-mile circular walk from Wolsingham mainly across field paths. The weather was to start dry, but rain was expected halfway through.

We did a short detour at the start of the walk alongside the Waskerley Beck to admire a series of waterfalls and pools known as "The Sills". There was more water in the river than there had been when the walk was reced at the end of July! The walk then went up a short slope between fields with fine views of the parish church of St Mary and St Stephen. We enjoyed passing a few farms specialising in shorthorn cattle. We were treated to a charm of goldfinches and a hare racing across the fields. All around the views were spectacular.



All was going well until we dropped down through fields to get to the main A689 road. The last field we had to cross was full of a large herd of very frisky bullocks who were rather too interested in us. It was too risky to try to attempt to cross the fields as there were so many of them, we retraced our steps up the hill and went down the farm road to the main road. This did entail us having to walk further along the busy road than we had planned but it seemed the safer option.

Having turned off the road, we crossed the River Wear and walked the path between the river, and the railway track up to the pretty Wolsingham Station. One of our party was very pleased to see this section as he is looking forward to watching the Flying Scotsman go up this bit of the track on the Wear Valley Railway in November. We crossed back over the river and took the riverside path, through a caravan park back into Wolsingham. There most of us had a well-earned coffee at the Cafe Number 10 before returning to our cars. Just as we got to the cars there was a sharp shower making us appreciate how lucky we had been with the weather during the walk.

7-9 MILE WALKING GROUP - Report by Chris Burton



“The 5 Village Walk”

The group of 11 walkers met in the centre of “Gilling West”. After an outline on the village history-Anglo Saxon through to current influence of both Aske and Skelton estates we headed west towards “Hartforth”; a very sleepy but attractive old village.

After a brief debate/vote on the architectural merits or otherwise of a recently re-developed Georgian “pile”, we crossed Hartforth estate, passing the old hall & clock tower.

We walked through pasture, then woodland, by the old mill house and on to “Ravensworth” and the ruined castle, previously the seat of the Fitzhugh family. Latterly the village has been better known as the seat of cricketer Lord Botham! Next, we tackled the steep incline to “Kirby Hill” with a super East/West panoramic view.

We enjoyed lunch on the quaint village green with alms houses, miniature Grammar School and the open medieval church.

Our return route was via the normally sleepy village of “Whashton”, to “Gilling West” (with a brief call at St Agatha’s church). The 8 mile walk was topped off with well deserved “cake, coffee and ice cream, at nearby “Aske Hall”.

SUMMER MUSIC QUIZ

set by Quiz Supremo Phil Clarke

Songs with Summer or similar in the title
Name the artist

1. Summertime
2. Summertime Blues
3. Summer in the City
4. Summer of 69
5. The Boys of Summer
6. Cruel Summer (released 1984)
7. Summer Holiday
8. Summer Nights
9. In the Summertime
10. Here comes the Sun
11. Sunshine of Your Love
12. All Summer Long
13. You are the Sunshine of my Life
14. Sunny Afternoon
15. The House of the Rising Sun
16. Ain’t No Sunshine
17. Good Day Sunshine
18. Cruel Summer (released 2019 Female American superstar)
19. Black Hole Sun (1994 Seattle Grunge Band)
20. Summertime Sadness (2012 Female American singer)

COFFEE AND CHAT

Coming up – Thursdays 2.30 – 3.30pm:

Thursday 8th October at the Cotherstone Chapel Café. This will be a special session in which you can, if you wish, make a start on a crafting project using a cornucopia of materials we will bring along. However, if you choose you can just enjoy the craic and scoff a great scone washed down with excellent coffee.

Thursday 12th November at Winters in Middleton -in-Teesdale.

QUIZ ANSWERS

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| 1. Ella Fitzgerald | 2. Eddie Cochran |
| 3. Lovin' Spoonful | 4. Bryan Adams |
| 5. Don Henley | 6. Bananarama |
| 7. Cliff Richard | 8. John Travolta and Olivia
Newton John |
| 9. Mungo Jerry | 10. Beatles |
| 11. Cream | 12. Beach Boys |
| 13. Stevie Wonder | 14. Kinks |
| 15. The Animals | 16. Bill Withers |
| 17. Beatles | 18. Taylor Swift |
| 19. Soundgarden | 20. Lana Del Rey |

At lunchtime. A story of love by Roger McGough

When the bus stopped suddenly to avoid
damaging a mother and child in the road, the
young lady in the green hat sitting opposite
was thrown across me,
and not being one to miss an opportunity
I started to make love
with all my body.

At first, she resisted saying that it
was too early in the morning and too soon
after breakfast and that anyway she found

me repulsive. But when I explained that this being a nuclearage, the world was going to end at lunchtime, she tookoff her greenhat, put her bus ticket into her pocket and joined in the exercise.

The buspeople, and therewere many of them, were shockedandsurprised, and amused-andannoyed, but when word got around that the world was coming to an end at lunchtime, they put their pride in their pockets with their bustickets and made love one with the other. And even the busconductor, feeling left out climbed into the cab and struck up some sort of relationship with the driver.

Thatnight, on the bus coming home, wewere all alittle embarrassed, especially me and the younglady in the green hat, and we all started to say in different ways howhasty and foolish we had been. Butthen, always having been a bitofalad, i stood up and said it was a pity that the world didn't nearly end every lunchtime, and that we could always pretend. And then it happened...

Quick asa flash we all changed partners, and soon the bus was aquiver with white mothball bodies doing naughty things.

And the next day
and everyday
In everybus
In everystreet
In everytown
In everycountry

People pretended that the world was coming to an end at lunchtime.
It still hasn't.
Although in a way it has

Group	Meeting Time	Contact details
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	1 st Thurs pm	Diana Marks 07762 626912
Climate Solutions	1 st Thurs am	Kate Bailey 07867 683195
Crochet Group	Varies	Hazel McCallum 01833 316484
Cryptic Crossword	2 nd Wed pm	Sue Overton 07512 368884
Discussion	2 nd Fri am	Glen Howard 01833 631639
Family History	2 nd Thurs pm	Alan Swindale 01388 488348
Gardening	1 st Fri pm	Julie Archer 07774 903377
Geography	3 rd Thurs 2pm	Phil Johnson 07792 959320
Geology	4 th Mon am	Bob Tuddenham 07812 378004
History	2 nd Thurs am	Tim Meacham 07847 182554
Holiday	Occasional	Kate Keen 07880 741151
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	Kate Keen 07880 741151
Needlecraft	1 st Mon pm	Glen Howard 01833 631639
Philosophy	4 th Tues 10am	Ruth Sansom 01325 401850

Group	Meeting Time	Contact details
Photography	1 st Tues am	Alan Kenwright 07731 122399
Pickleball	Every Mon pm	Ruth Lapworth 07787 978696
Poetry	2 nd Wed am	Annie Clouston 01833 637091
Rummikub	3 rd Tues pm	Julie Archer 07774 903377
Scrabble	2 nd Mon pm	Judith Fanner 01833 650150
Science and Technology	2 nd Mon am	Ian Royston 07818 046938
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 07591 095765
Understanding Classical Music	4 th Fri 10am	Ian Royston 07818 046938
Wildflower Group	2 nd Wed 2pm	Anne Thomson 07928 594404
Wimmin Swimmin'	Saturdays	Sue Overton 07512 368884
Wine Group	3 rd Tues pm	Tim Meacham 07847 182554
Wine Group Too	Last Tues pm	Jane Mardon 07816 845557
Walking Groups		
Shorter walks 3-4 miles	3 rd or 4 th Mon pm	Liz Colley 01833 695197
Walking 4-6 miles	2 nd Tues 10am	Janet Bayles 07887 834346
Walking 7-9 miles	3 rd Wed 10am	Nicky Grace nickygrace729@gmail.com
Fell Walking	4 th Wed	Jane Johnstone 07771 657440

WHAT'S ON : 2026

16 SEPT - 9 OCT



Barnard Castle's Community Arts Centre www.thewitham.org.uk



Dave Rowntree: No One You Know (10+)
Wed 16 Sept | **Spoken Word** | 7.30pm | £16-£18.50

Connor Selby
Fri 18 Sept | **Blues Music** | 7.30pm | £20

Bingo That's Bonkers! (18+)
Sat 19 Sept | **Night Out** | 8pm | £21

National Theatre Live: The Misanthrope
Tues 22 Sept | **Screening** | 7pm | (15) | £13-£15

Defiant: County Durham, The Miners' Strike and Its Legacy
Wed 23 Sept | **Film** | 7pm | £6

Emmelie Pankhurst: Angel or Anarchist?
Thurs 24 Sept | **Theatre** | 7.30pm | £17.50

Seann Walsh: This is Torture (14+)
Fri 25 Sept | **Comedy** | 8pm | £18

You, Me & ADHD with Ryan Swain
Fri 25 Sept | **Spoken Word** | 7pm | Pay what you can

A Celebration of the Simon and Garfunkel
Sat 26 Sept | **Music** | 7.30pm | £19

Attention All Shipping:
A Celebration of the Shipping Forecast
Mon 28 Sept | **Spoken Word** | 7.30pm | £21

Animal Farm
Wed 30 Sept | **Theatre** | 7.30pm | £16-£19

An Evening without Kate Bush
Thurs 1 Oct | **Musical Theatre** | 7.30pm | £23-£26

A Foreigner's Journey
Fri 2 Oct | **Tribute** | 7.30pm | £22.50

The Jerseys
Sat 3 Oct | **Tribute** | 7.30pm | £29

Kelly Rickard: Burning Love (14+)
Sat 3 Oct | **Comedy** | 7.30pm | £15



Jimeoin: Ballyhoo! (14+)
Wed 7 Oct | **Comedy** | 7.30pm | £20.50



Fairport Convention
Fri 9 Oct | **Folk Music** | 7.30pm | £36

A Tribute to Sting & The Police
starring the Rozzers
Sat 10 Oct | **Tribute** | 7.30pm | £26



Box Office: 01833 631107

THE WITHAM, 3 HORSE MARKET, BARNARD CASTLE, DL12 8LY