



## Members Newsletter December 2023

### A Message from the Chair

Hello everyone

The next newsletter after the November edition was due to be published in January, but that would have meant missing Christmas. So here is a cheeky little Christmas edition. This is what we did last year. I would like to get into the pattern of an edition every two months, starting in February. So, in theory, we will in future always have a Christmas themed newsletter in December.

Please do look at the item about our Christmas social on 14<sup>th</sup> December – see page 4. Whether or not we see you on the 14<sup>th</sup>, we hope you all have a great Christmas and a happy New Year.

Trevor Robinson

### Contents

November Monthly Meeting	p2	Christmas Quiz	p9
December Monthly Meeting Preview	p4	Odds and Ends	p10
Christmas Social	p4	Crossword	p11
Tom's Tales	p4	How Not to Cook a Turkey	p12
Monthly Meetings in 2024	p5	Christmas Dingbats Answers	p13
Christmas Dingbats	p6	Christmas Quiz Answers	p14
Alnwick u3a Civic Society Award	p7	Crossword Answers	P14
December Photos	p8	End Piece	P14

# Monthly Meeting – 16<sup>th</sup> November 2023

## The work of the Coast Guard

Presented by Sam Stephenson, Senior Coastguard, Seahouses

We were treated to an excellent presentation by Sam and his assistant Steve Kenyon. Sam told us something about what HM Coastguard do, and a summary of their history. Then he and Steve demonstrated a range of the equipment they use as part of their job.

Before HM Coastguard, smuggling was rife as people tried to avoid taxes. In 1698, Riding Officers on horseback patrolled the coasts to stop smuggling. By 1743 it's estimated that half the tea drunk in Britain was illegally imported.



HM Coastguard was formally established on 15 January 1822, and has been working to keep people safe at the coast and sea ever since.

HM Coastguards provide a 24-hour maritime and coastal search and rescue emergency coordination and response service for the UK. The Joint Rescue Coordination Centre (JRCC) based in Hampshire is the heart of the national coastguard rescue coordination system, connecting 10 Maritime Rescue Coordination Centres (MRCCs) around the UK from Falmouth to Shetland - covering over 11,000 miles of coastline.

Their helicopters operate from 10 strategically located bases and are regularly called out to incidents on the water and along the coast, as well as to help with inland rescues where a helicopter is needed, such as mountain rescues. There are also over 300 coastguard rescue teams based in communities around the coast made up of around 3,500 volunteers.

HM Coastguard coordinates all maritime search and rescue (SAR) operations in the UK through their network of coastguard stations, operating 24 hours a day. Staff in operations rooms coordinate the response to a variety of incidents from lost or missing people to climbers stuck on cliffs or vessels missing at sea. It receives requests for assistance in many forms including 999 calls, mayday broadcasts, calls on VHF DSC and Channel 16 and satellite distress calls.



In an emergency they may send a coastguard rescue helicopter, coastguard rescue teams or lifeboats (RNLI or independent lifeboats). They can also call upon other emergency services, or other vessels at sea, which may assist if a boat is lost or in trouble.

The Joint Rescue Coordination Centre (JRCC) based in Hampshire is the heart of the national coastguard rescue coordination system, connecting 10 Maritime Rescue Coordination Centres (MRCCs) around the UK. HM Coastguard is part of the Joint Maritime Security Centre (JMSC), a multi-agency organisation that advises what UK assets are available to respond to maritime security incidents in the UK. HM Coastguard liaison officers are based within the JMSC and act as a conduit for information between the JMSC and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency.

## November Monthly Meeting contd

After the presentation part of the meeting, Sam and Steve moved on to demonstrate some of their equipment.

The photo on the left shows the Breeches Buoy technique of rescue (no longer used). It was a mainly



used to assist with the rescue of people from a shipwreck to place of safety. On the right is attaching a 'line' (bit of rope!) to the water rescue lifejacket. The photo below shows the life jacket and line connected, and Steve is also holding a rescue torpedo, a piece of equipment used to aid the rescue of a person in the water.



The evac stretcher, or body splint, is shown on the left. This is used for keeping the casualty secure while being extracted, possibly from a confined space.

Finally, the photo on the right shows a Dress Uniform jacket. The medals are:

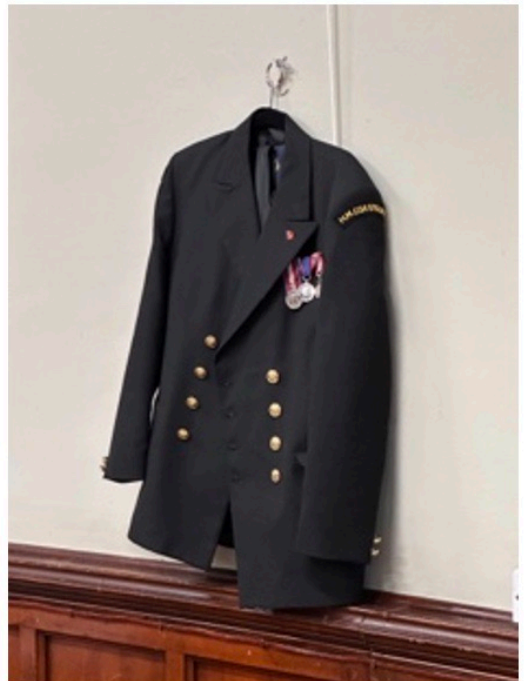
Queens Diamond Jubilee

Queens Platinum Jubilee

Long service medal (20 years)

After the presentation, there was a good Q&A session, with many questions from the interested audience. All were fielded well by Sam and Steve. We all agreed this had been a very enjoyable and informative talk, and Steve and Sam were warmly applauded by the appreciative audience.

**Trevor Robinson**



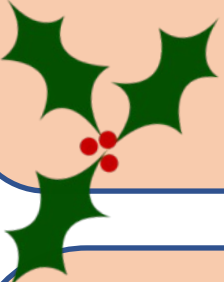
## December Monthly Meeting

Dec 14th *"Diana Dors: Film Star, Actor and Paperback Writer"*

Presented by Martin Shingler

Senior Lecturer in Radio and Film Studies

University of Sunderland



## Christmas Social

The Christmas Social will follow on after the December speaker has finished.

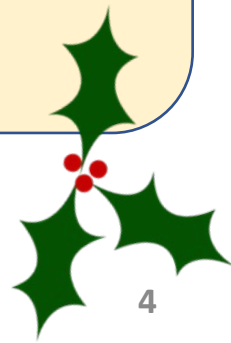
Many of you put your names down for this event at the November meeting. But if you missed doing this, or were not at that meeting but would like to come along to the Social, could you please let Pat Ashton know, at [membership.alnwick.u3a@gmail.com](mailto:membership.alnwick.u3a@gmail.com). This will help us with planning the event.



## Tom's Tales

A barrister is cross examining a witness. "Now, you strike me as an intelligent honest man, Mr Morgan.

One who wouldn't cheat or lie". "Thank you "replies Mr Morgan "I'd say the same about you if I wasn't under oath".





# Monthly Meetings in 2024

## **JAN 18th 'SHAK'**

**Speaker:** Stephen Wylie, Founder of SHAK; author of 'It's a Dog's Life' and 'Rescue in Lockdown.'

## **FEB 15th 'Life in Japan'**

**Speaker:** Denise Howe talking about Japanese customs and her time living in Japan.

## **MARCH 21st 'The Craft of a Wheelwright'**

**Speaker:** Peter Thompson, Member of the Guild of Wheelwrights, the last wheelwright in Northumberland before his retirement.

## **APRIL 18th 'Paintings from the Northumberland coastline'**

**Speaker:** Katherine Renton, a Northumberland based artist, explaining her work as she uses paints which she makes from coastline debris like sea coal, and brick fragments. Through her unusual medium she explores the social and environmental effects of industries such as coalmining.

## **MAY 16th 'The History of Lindisfarne Castle, Past and Present'**

**Speaker:** Nick Lewis, Collections and House Officer, National Trust, Lindisfarne Castle.

## **JUNE 20th 'The Dialects and Music of Northumberland'**

**Speaker:** Musician Kim Bibby-Wilson will talk about aspects of the Northumbrian dialect, illustrated with songs, and recordings of local poets and speakers.

## **JULY 18th 'The Life of a Submariner'**

**Speaker:** Craig Weir, retired submariner, will talk about his experience of having been a submariner.

## **AUGUST – NO MEETING**

## **SEPTEMBER 19th 'The Buildings of William Newton'**

**Speaker:** Richard Pears, Durham University Librarian, will talk about William Newton, architect of over forty buildings, including Howick Hall and Lemmington Hall.

## **OCTOBER 17th (AGM 1st) 'How Emergency Surgery has changed over my lifetime'**

**Speaker:** Alnwick u3a member, George Nasmyth, retired general surgeon.

## **NOVEMBER 21st 'The Northumberland Hedgehog Rescue Trust'**

**Speaker:** Jen Stephenson joined the Trust 2 years ago wanting to work with wildlife after retiring from teaching. The Trust was set up over 25 years ago.

## **DECEMBER 12th (also Xmas social) 'Hidden Gems of Northumberland'**

**Speaker:** Alnwick u3a member Richard Booth has combined his interests in hill walking, photography, history, and archaeology since moving to Northumberland. He will illustrate the story of Northumberland's early history through images of historic sites still found in the landscape.

# Christmas Dingbats

1	2	3
TOUFRANKCH		A3 TORTILLA A4
4	5	6
CCCCC FESTIVE	<b>XMAS</b>	Stel
7	8	9
Hello Spring Hi Summer Howdy Autumn Yo Winter	Shhh... Sir Galahad	NOEL NOEL NOEL NOEL NOEL NOEL
10	11	12
Pres ents 	ABCDE FGHIJK MNOPQ RSTUV WXYZ	PPPPP Our planet



## Alnwick u3a Civic Society Award

Alnwick u3a was nominated for a 2023 Alnwick Civic Society Commendation, and the awarding panel decided that the u3a's older age support and cultural activities are deserving of recognition for the contribution they make to the town.

The Civic Society's citation said that "Alnwick u3a is a valuable organisation which helps older people meet with others, sustain or foster new interests, even develop new skills and maintain and develop regular contact with others. It is an especially important link for older people who find themselves on their own, as well as a useful source of contact for individuals new to the area."

The Awards Ceremony was held at St James Church Centre in Alnwick on 15th November. Pat Ashton, our Membership Secretary, was presented with the Commendation Certificate by Kevin Trickett MBE, President and Chair of Wakefield Civic Society and Chair of the Yorkshire and Humber Association of Civic Societies.



The next day, I showed the Certificate to a gathering of some 50 members at our November monthly meeting. I think it's fair to say that the Award was warmly welcomed and recognised as a tribute to the work carried out by Committee members, group leaders, and to one degree or another, all of us.

**Trevor Robinson, Chair**



## December Photos

This is a small selection of the photos that have graced these pages over the past year.



Meercats at Fuerteventura Zoo, by Shelley Willis



Marc Chagall Tree of Life, Sarrebourg, France, by Maureen Sayers



Luberon Village, France, by Alan Sayers



Mushrooms, by John Godfrey

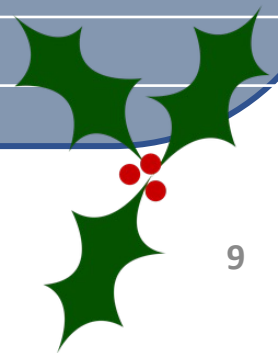




# Christmas Quiz



- 1 Which country first started the tradition of putting up a Christmas tree?
- 2 How many ghosts show up in A Christmas Carol?
- 3 Where does the word 'winter' come from?
- 4 Which country did eggnog originate?
- 5 In Home Alone, where are the McCallisters going on holiday when they leave Kevin behind?
- 6 How many gifts were given in total in 'The Twelve Days of Christmas' song?
- 7 Where does the royal family traditionally celebrate Christmas?
- 8 What is the best-selling Christmas song?
- 9 What country has the most reindeer?
- 10 What King was crowned on Christmas Day?
- 11 What year did Mariah Carey's 'All I Want For Christmas Is You' come out?
- 12 In which country is it tradition to eat KFC for Christmas dinner?
- 13 How many of Rudolph's fellow reindeers' names start with 'D'?
- 14 Which city has been donating Trafalgar Square's Christmas tree every year since 1947?
- 15 If you're born on Christmas day, what's your star sign?
- 16 Which animal carried Mary before she gave birth to Jesus?
- 17 What is traditionally hidden inside a Christmas pudding?
- 18 What time is the King's speech traditionally broadcast on Christmas Day?
- 19 What colour suit did Santa wear until Coca Cola rebranded him in red?
- 20 How many turkeys are eaten in the UK every year?





## Odds and Ends

1N73LL1G3NCE  
15 7H3 4B1L17Y  
70 4D4P7  
70 CH4NG3

573PH3N H4WK1NG

The wine merchant showed his elderly customer a new wine. It's made from an anti-diuretic hybrid grape and reduces the number of times older people have to go to the toilet during the night. It's called Pino More.

The "Guinness Book of World Records" holds the world record for being the book most often stolen from libraries.

A man asked a friend, "have you ever tried blind-folded archery?"

Water makes up 71% of the Earth's mass. That water is uncarbonated. So, technically, the Earth is flat.

The friend replied "No, can't say I have".

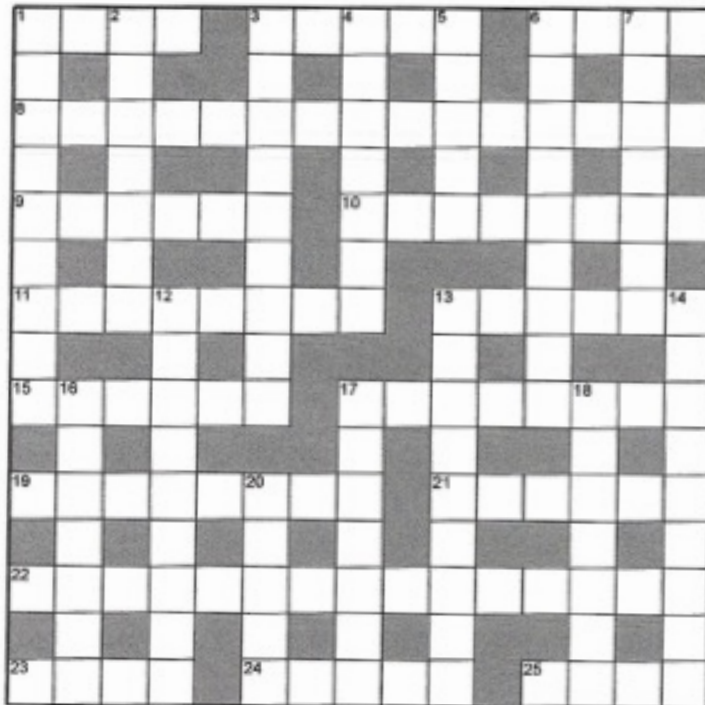
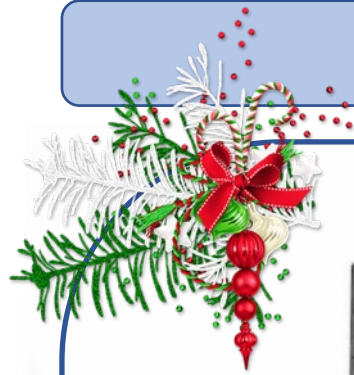
"Pity," came the response, "you don't know what you're missing."

Just got hospitalised due to a serious peekaboo accident. They put me in the ICU.

Companies are boasting about making plants taste like meat. Ha! Cows have been doing that for years.



## Crossword – courtesy of Alan Sayers



### ACROSS

- 1 The high points of a skiing holiday (4)
- 3 Dressed like a crusader (5)
- 6 Bread fed to the birds (4)
- 8 An illustrious vessel (8,7)
- 9 It's not the batsman who scores these (6)
- 10 She'll let you under her own roof (8)
- 11 Bizarrely, when you add this to your list it'll shorten it (2,6)
- 13 Bird islands (6)
- 15 The buzz felt by Aldrin as he walked on the moon (6)
- 17 Sinatra's about to join a group of tradesmen (8)
- 19 Where one's hospital gown could be found (8)
- 21 You should never get a speeding ticket when driving one of these (6)
- 22 Looks like a dog stranded in the Indian Ocean (9,6)
- 23 I left Craig at the rock face (4)
- 24 Make a fuss on stage (5)
- 25 Notably, it's a part of everyday life (4)

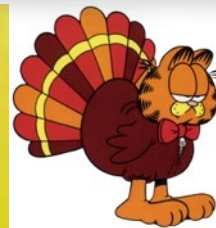
### DOWN

- 1 The humiliation of being relegated to a cellar (9)
- 2 Head of Radio Caroline was this (7)
- 3 Exercise on the beach perhaps (9)
- 4 Two girls on one knee (7)
- 5 Looking haggard after the match finished level (5)
- 6 There are two of these situated between Virginia and Georgia (9)
- 7 A good mixer working in the kitchen (7)
- 12 Strange live activity involving devilry (9)
- 13 Advertising slogan that an angler may want to use (9)
- 14 That's 24 hours that I'm not going to see again! (9)
- 16 She could be Erica's twin sister (7)
- 17 Declare that for a while things have been as par (7)
- 18 The price one pays for food served on a plane (7)
- 20 Promises made by some loathsome character (5)

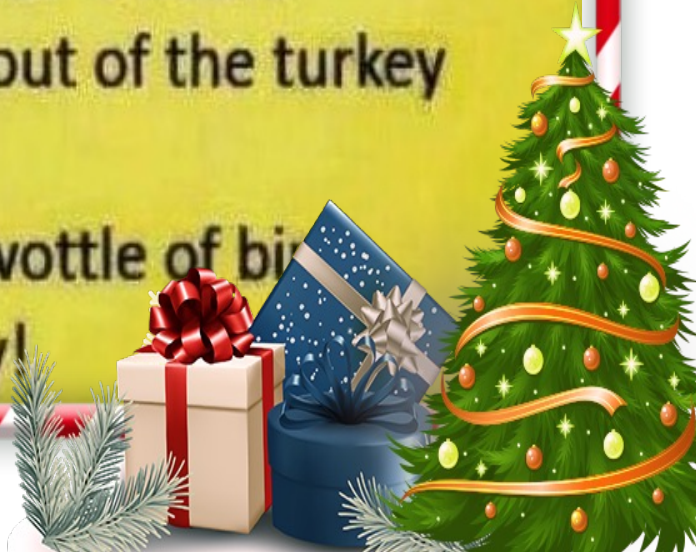
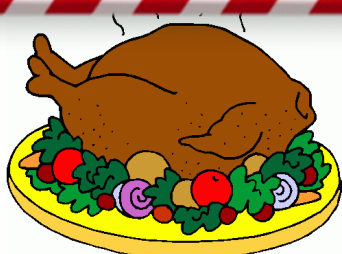


# How **NOT** to Cook a Turkey

(I know this was in the Newsletter last Christmas, but your editor really likes it!)



- Step 1. Buy a turkey
- Step 2. Have a glass of wine
- Step 3. Stuff turkey
- Step 4. Have a glass of wine
- Step 5. Put turkey in oven
- Step 6. Relax and have a glass of wine
- Step 7. Turk the bastey
- Step 8. Wine of glass another get
- Step 9. Hunt for meat thermometer
- Step 10. Glass yourself another pour of wine
- Step 11. Bake the wine for 4 hours
- Step 12. Take the oven out of the turkey
- Step 13. Tet the sable
- Step 14. Grab another wottle of bi
- Step 15. Turk the carvey!



# Christmas Dingbats Answers

1 Frankincense	2 Snowball	3 Wrapping Paper
TOUFRANKCH		A3 TORTILLA A4
4 Festive Season	5 White Christmas	6 Tinsel
CCCCCC FESTIVE	XMAS	Stel
7 Seasons Greetings	8 Silent Night	9 The First Noel
Hello Spring Hi Summer Howdy Autumn Yo Winter	Shhh... Sir Galahad	NOEL NOEL NOEL NOEL NOEL NOEL
10 Opening presents	11 Noel	12 Peace on Earth
Pres ents	ABCDE FGHIJK MNOPQ RSTUV WXYZ	PPPPP Our planet





## Christmas Quiz Answers



1 Germany	11 1994
2 Four	12 Japan
3 From an old Germanic word that means "time of water"	13 Three - Dasher, Dancer and Donner
4 Britain	14 Oslo
5 Paris	15 Capricorn
6 364 gifts	16 Donkey
7 Sandringham Estate	17 A silver coin
8 White Christmas	18 3pm
9 Norway	19 Tan
10 William the Conqueror	20 10 million

## Crossword Answers

**ACROSS** - 1 Alps. 3 Caped. 6 Cobs. 8 Aircraft Carrier. 9 Extras. 10 Landlady. 11 Et Cetera. 13 Canary. 15 Thrill. 17 Artisans. 19 Wardrobe. 21 Hearse. 22 Christmas Island. 23 Crag. 24 Scene. 25 Very.

**DOWN** - 1 Abasement. 2 Piratic. 3 Clamshell. 4 Patella. 5 Drawn. 6 Carolinas. 7 Blender. 12 Evildoing. 13 Catchline. 14 Yesterday. 16 Heather. 17 Average. 18 Airfare. 20 Oaths.

### End Piece

*Autumn is fading  
its palette losing colour.  
The earth waits for a new canvas  
brushed with a whisper  
from winter.*



Mary Atkinson