



Members Newsletter March 2022

A Message from the Chair

Welcome everyone to the March edition of the Newsletter and to ***the end of Covid restrictions***. On the committee, we would really like to hear what you think about the extended and more frequent Newsletters, as it's been a year since the format changed. We would also love to have some more contributions from within our membership – so come on folks, let's see what **you** have to offer?

Kathy Platt

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March Photos

This month's theme is *Springtime in Northumberland*. All photos taken by Alan Sayers.



Snowdrops on Rock Farm Trail



*Pussy Willow at Branton Ponds,
Powburn*



Daffodils at Carham Church



Wild Kid at Wooler



Catkins on the Rugley Road



Alnwick Garden

February Monthly Meeting – 17th February 2022
***“Walking Newcastle”*: Presented by Baroness Quin of Gateshead**

Baroness Joyce Quin gave us a very entertaining and enthusiastic talk entitled, “Walking Newcastle” which clearly showed her passion for the City’s history. She has been a City Guide since 1976, but guided tours around Newcastle began in the 1960s. The City Highlights tour begins in the Central Arcade and finishes on the Quay Side.

The Central Arcade is part of the old Central Exchange Building, built by Richard Grainger as part of the redevelopment of Newcastle city centre, and completed in 1838.

The interior of the building was badly damaged by fires in 1867 and then again in 1901. Much of the interior was replaced by the Central Arcade which opened in 1906.



Grainger Town, which describes the area around Grey Street, Clayton Street and Grainger Street was designed in the 1830s

out of a partnership between Richard Grainger, developer, John Dobson, architect and John Clayton, Town Clerk. The classical architecture was a marvel of the age; Gladstone called it “our best modern street”.



At the top of Grey Street lies Grey’s Monument, a monument surprisingly erected in his lifetime to celebrate the Reform Act of 1832. Other reforming measures included restrictions on the employment of children, and the abolition of slavery in the British Empire in 1833.

February Monthly Meeting (contd)

Further along Grey Street, the building which is now Lloyds Bank is the site of the house in which King Charles I was held prisoner. There is a plaque commemorating the King's stay on the side of the Lloyd's building in Market Street.

Newcastle was a Royalist stronghold but during the Civil war, after a long drawn out siege, the town walls were breached by the Scottish army of Parliamentarians in 1644.

Street names can give us an insight into Newcastle's history. High Bridge is named after the bridge which crossed the Lort Burn, a subterranean burn which was infilled to create Grey Street. Pilgrim Street was one of the most important streets in medieval Newcastle; its name was derived from the Pilgrims who lodged there on their way to worship at Our Lady's Chapel in Jesmond.

New Bridge Street was named after the bridge which crossed the Ouseburn. Westgate Road was once the Roman West Gate into the City; Newcastle was once a walled city and parts of the wall remain today in the area around Blackfriars. The Romans built a bridge across the Tyne guarded by a fort called Pons Aelius.

After the Norman Conquest the importance of the river crossing led to the building of a wooden fort. The existing castle keep dates from 1172 and the fortress Black Gate from 1247, named after Patrick Black, a tenant. Within the castle is the only surviving Norman postern gate.

In the Sandhill area lived wealthy Merchants and Bankers. Bessie Surtees famously eloped with John Scott (later to become Lord Eldon) from a window of her house in Sandhill to marry in Scotland. The marriage was officially blessed two months later at St Nicholas Cathedral. St Nicholas Cathedral dates from the early 14th century; its most notable feature is the Lantern Tower and Crown Spire, which are more commonly seen in Scottish churches.

The Quay Side, which is the last part of the tour, has changed dramatically over the years. Once part of Newcastle's industrial heritage, the commercial dockside used to be an unsavoury run-down area. After the industries moved on, the area underwent huge regeneration and has become a hub for Arts and Culture.

February Monthly Meeting (contd)

The High-Level Bridge is the oldest of the Tyne bridges, linking the high ground of Gateshead with Newcastle, was built in 1849 and designed by Robert Stephenson. The Swing Bridge designed by William Armstrong was opened in 1876 using pressurised water to power hydraulic engines and is one of the industrial wonders of



the Victorian era. When the King Edward VII rail bridge was opened in 1906 it enabled trains to pass through Newcastle Central Station.

The Tyne Bridge is officially called the King George V bridge and was opened by him in 1928. Constructed by Dorman Long of Middlesbrough, the company also provided the steel for Sydney Harbour bridge. The Redheugh Bridge was opened by Diana Princess of Wales in 1983.



The Millennium bridge or “Blinking eye bridge” uses innovative technology to turn the bridge on a pivot to form an arch allowing ships to pass.

This footbridge linking Newcastle with Gateshead was officially opened by Queen Elizabeth II in 2002.

In closing, Baroness Quin had one word of advice to anyone walking around Newcastle, “Do not forget to look up!”.

Maureen Sayers
(photos by Maureen Sayers)

Future Monthly Meetings in 2022

17th Mar – Susan Fulton – ‘Canine Partners’

Describing how Canine Partners assistance dogs are trained to help their disabled owners with everyday tasks.

21st Apr - Clare Byas – ‘Ad Gefrin’

An introduction to the whisky distillery currently being built in Wooler, with an exhibition centre celebrating the golden age of our Anglo-Saxon heritage.

19th May – Bill Bland – ‘The History of Ordnance Survey’

Ordnance Survey from its origins up to the present day.

16th June – Andy Griffin – ‘Hadrian and his Wall’

In celebration of the wall being 1900 years old.

u3a Regional AGM

This takes place on 25th April. If you are interested in attending, there is information on the following link:

<https://u3asites.org.uk/northumbria/page/68536>

Feedback & contributions are very welcome!

Please send any comments on this newsletter, suggestions for improvement and contributions for future editions to:

Newsletter.Alnwick.u3a@gmail.com

The next newsletter will be published on 2nd May, and the contributions deadline is 29th April.

Did you know?

1. In the 1400s in England, a law was created that allowed a man to beat his wife with a stick no thicker than his thumb. Hence, we have 'the rule of thumb'.
2. Many years ago in Scotland, when a new game was invented, it was ruled 'Gentlemen Only... Ladies Forbidden' and thus the word GOLF entered the English language.
3. Each king in a deck of playing cards represents a great king from history: Spades - King David; Hearts – Charlemagne; Diamonds - Julius Caesar; Clubs - Alexander the Great.
4. In Shakespeare's time, mattresses were secured on bed frames by ropes. When the ropes were pulled, the mattress tightened, making the bed firmer to sleep on. Hence the phrase, 'goodnight, sleep tight'.
5. It was the accepted practice in Babylon 4,000 years ago that for a month after the wedding, the bride's father would supply his son-in-law with all the mead he could drink. Mead is a honey beer and because their calendar was lunar based, this period was called the honey month, which is known today as 'the honeymoon.'
6. In English pubs, ale is ordered by pints and quarts. So, in old England, when customers got unruly, the bartender would yell at them 'Mind your pints and quarts and settle down.' Hence the expression 'mind your P's and Q's.'
7. In an English pub, drinkers had a whistle baked into the rim or handle of their ceramic cups. When they needed a refill, they used the whistle to get some service. 'Wet your whistle' is the phrase inspired by this practice.
8. In 1696, William III of England introduced a property tax which required those living in houses with more than six windows to pay a levy. To avoid the tax, homeowners would brick up all windows except six. (The Window Tax lasted until 1851, and older houses with bricked-up windows are still a common sight in the U.K.) As the bricked-up windows prevented some rooms from receiving any sunlight, the tax was referred to as 'daylight robbery'!

Chocolate Quiz

	Question
1	What are the bubbles in an aero bar made from?
2	Who invented chocolate bars?
3	What variety of Wispa did Cadbury discontinue in 2003?
4	Which brand of dark chocolate produced by Cadbury is named after a village in England?
5	How many segments are there in a Terry's Chocolate Orange – 15, 20 or 25?
6	How many 'After Eights' are in a typical 300g box – 25, 30 or 35?
7	Which country consumes the most chocolate per person per year?
8	M&Ms were created in 1941 as a means for soldiers to enjoy chocolate without it melting – True or False?
9	Are cocoa beans a Fruit or Vegetable?
10	Over 60% of people eat this part of the chocolate bunny first?
11	"Life is like a box of chocolates; you never know what you're gonna get" is a line from which movie?
12	Which band sang the song "It started with a kiss"?
13	Which children's author wrote 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory'?
14	Which actor played the original Willy Wonka in 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory'?
15	Which chocolate bar had the slogan "Try Both and Pick a side?"
16	The Green Triangle features in which popular chocolate tub?
17	The galaxy truffle was controversially removed from which chocolate tub in 2011?
18	What is the name of the mountain on a pack of Toblerone?
19	What were Snickers named after?
20	How many different colours of Smarties are there?

Odds and Ends

Chemical elements which didn't make it into the Periodic Table:

Premium – a top element

Superbium – even topper

Tedium – long half-life

Imodium – essential in some diets

Pandemonium – unpredictable properties

Planetarium - stardust

So a neighbour knocks on my door at 3 am... **3 AM!!**

Luckily, I was already awake, playing the bagpipes.

I've learned two important lessons in my life. I can't recall the first one, but the second one is that I need to start writing stuff down.

Fun fact - we have never found a cave painting of a salad.

I like to make lists. I also like to leave them on my kitchen counter and then try to guess what's on them when I'm at the supermarket. Fun game.

My favourite childhood memory was building sandcastles with my gran. Until my mother took the urn from me

Coffee is vital for survival. Dinosaurs didn't have coffee, and look how that turned out.

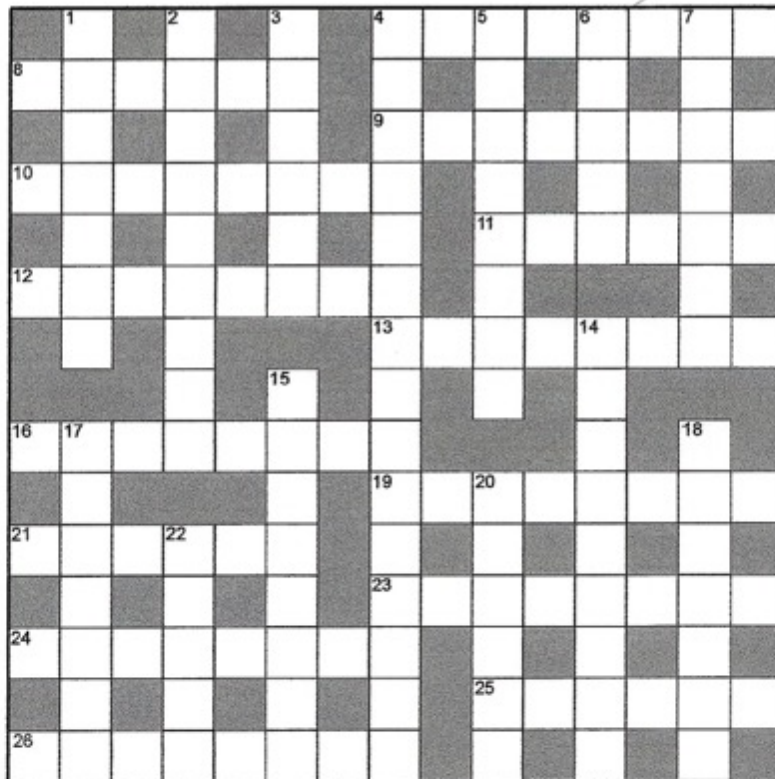
"Nudist welfare man's model wife fell for the Chinese hypnotist from the Coop bacon factory"

Genuine headline in the *News of the World*, 26th April 1970

Some people cry when chopping onions. The trick is not to form an emotional bond.

Crossword

(courtesy of Maureen and Alan Sayers)



ACROSS

- 4 Old port (8)
- 8 Germanic destroyer (6)
- 9 Search for a method, then turn one's back on it (4,4)
- 10 Crumbly colour? (8)
- 11 Selfies taken include those at the carnival (6)
- 12 Ideal for beef sandwiches (4,4)
- 13 Newcastle football team play here (8)
- 16 Run into a woman with dark hair (8)
- 19 Jumping through the roof (8)
- 21 Burden someone with a joint of meat (6)
- 23 Radical soccer player (4,4)
- 24 Reveal a youngster performing on the stage (8)
- 25 Resail again heading for the East Mediterranean coast (6)
- 26 True lady about to have an affair (8)

DOWN

- 1 Playtime in the afternoon (7)
- 2 Cautioned about going into teaching (9)
- 3 Albion changed into a white strip (6)
- 4 She grew up in the lowlands (4,2,3,6)
- 5 Offender breaks out, only to do wrong again (8)
- 6 Make a partly over-elaborated speech (5)
- 7 Responded to something poorly created (7)
- 14 From the North Pole there's only one direction you can go (9)
- 15 Put to sleep, but not for good (8)
- 17 Arrived at to find every single one is in the red (7)
- 18 Like a circle, it's unfinished (7)
- 20 It's unreasonable to expect the peacemakers to hold a carnival (6)
- 22 Do well not finishing with an alternative to glue (5)

No Longer With Us

Sadly, u3a member Brian Holt passed away on 20th February

u3a 40th Year Anniversary Woodland

As part of the u3a 40th year anniversary year celebrations, a woodland is being planted in the Brecon Beacons with contributions of native tree saplings from u3as across the country. Alnwick Committee wondered about some tree planting in Alnwick??

Any Member interested in progressing this idea please contact Pat Ashton, at

membership.alnwick.u3a@gmail.com

CRIBBAGE GROUP

I told you in the December Newsletter about the new Cribbage Group. It is now up and running, and here is a photo of the Group members in action.



The Group meets on the 2nd & 4th Wednesday mornings, 10-12, in St. Michael's Hall. Whether you are a regular player, a bit rusty, or a complete beginner, come along and join us.

Shelley Willis, Group Leader

New U3A Intermediate walking Group – First outing!

10 keen walkers, including 4 new U3A members, gathered in Bamburgh on Tuesday 1st March, for the first walk of the newly established intermediate walking group. The bright sunshine welcomed everyone as they put on their boots ready for the 7-mile circular ramble from Bamburgh.

The group strolled around Budle Bay to Warren Mill. In no time we arrived at the Nature Reserve to stop for drinks and snacks and a stunning view of birds dancing in the shallow water.

We then turned inland to walk up the track to Spindlestone Heughs before turning left towards the coast path. The downward road provided all of us with a magnificent view of Bamburgh Castle and the Farne Islands beyond.



Our lunch was calling, so after walking across the corner of Bamburgh golf course, we descended to the Pill Box above Budle Bay to ‘grab’ the 3 wooden benches. Silence was achieved as everyone tucked into their lunch and marvelled at the scene across the bay to Ross Sands and Lindisfarne Castle. We all agreed no amount of money could purchase such a breathtaking view. We completed our walk by taking the Coast Path across Bamburgh Golf Course and back to the start.

What a start to the U3A Intermediate Walking Programme, great company, a good walk, and perfect weather. Long may it continue.

If you are interested in joining the group have a look at the Intermediate Walk programme on the Alnwick U3A website. Contact the Groups Co-ordinator who will pass on your details to Julie and Peter Hall who will ensure you receive all the information for the next walk.

Safeguarding

Alnwick u3a has a safeguarding policy, which, if you are interested in seeing what it covers, you can find it by clicking on the link below:

<https://u3asites.org.uk/files/a/alnwick/docs/alnwicku3asafeguardingpolicyandprocedure.pdf>

If you have any issues or concerns that you would like to discuss with someone, u3a member Hazel Verhamme has had training in these matters and would be happy to talk with you.

You can contact her via membership.alnwick.u3a@gmail.com

Communications between u3a members

As part of our Data Protection policy, we must all be careful about how we use the contact details of members, including Committee members. You can find the policy here:

<https://u3asites.org.uk/files/a/alnwick/docs/dataprotectionpolicy-update-061020.doc.pdf>

There have been a couple of recent incidents where members have sought a Group Leader's contact details by phoning the Secretary's home number, which was in the Welcome Pack. Any such enquiries should in future be made to the Groups Coordinator at

groups.alnwick.u3a@gmail.com

The Committee has decided that, for full GDPR compliance, all private contact details be removed from the Welcome Pack. No private contact details should be used in future. This will not prevent Group Leaders from sharing numbers with group members, if they wish.



50 Years Ago

Oh my goodness, does this seem like 50 years ago?

This was the top 20 on 4th March 1972, the right hand side shows their positions on 11th, 18th and 25th.

There are some big songs there; American Pie - Don MacLean, Without you - Nilsson and Say you don't mind - Colin Blunstone.

Do you remember what you were doing then?

Anne McMillan

MARCH 1972				
4		11	18	25
1	Son Of My Father <i>Chicory Tip</i> (CBS)	3	4	12
2	American Pie <i>Don MacLean</i> (UA)	2	2	3
3	Without You <i>Nilsson</i> (RCA)	1	1	1
4	Look Wot You Dun <i>Slade</i> (Polydor)	8	13	18
5	Got To Be There <i>Michael Jackson</i> (Tamla Motown)	6	7	8
6	Have You Seen Her? <i>The Chi-Lites</i> (MCA)	14	-	-
9	Mother And Child Reunion <i>Paul Simon</i> (CBS)	7	5	6
8	Storm In A Tea Cup <i>The Fortunes</i> (Capitol)	11	14	-
9	Blue Is The Colour <i>Chelsea F.C.</i> (Penny Farthing)	5	8	11
10	Day After Day <i>Badfinger</i> (Apple)	13	16	-
11	Poppa Joe <i>The Sweet</i> (RCA)	12	12	17
12	Beg, Steal Or Borrow <i>The New Seekers</i> (Polydor)	4	3	2
13	Mother Of Mine <i>Neil Reid</i> (Decca)	15	10	15
14	Telegram <i>Sam T. Rex</i> (T. Rex)	18	-	-
15	I'd Like To Teach The World To Sing <i>The New Seekers</i> (Polydor)	-	-	20
16	My World <i>The Bee Gees</i> (Polydor)	20	-	-
17	Say You Don't Mind <i>Colin Blunstone</i> (CBS)	17	15	-
18	All I Ever Need Is You <i>Sonny and Cher</i> (MCA)	-	-	-
19	I Can't Help Myself <i>Donny Elbert</i> (Avco)	16	11	13
20	Let's Stay Together <i>Al Green</i> (London)	-	-	-

A CENTURY OF WEDDING GOWNS

An Exhibition at Newcastle Cathedral until March 24th

You don't have to be a follower of fashion, or a connoisseur of exquisite needle craft, to enjoy this free exhibition. The display, in almost fifty shades of white - from faded, dusty ecru through to sparkling ice-blue white - encapsulates our social history and evokes many personal memories.

Here are designer gowns, cascading bejewelled veils, quirky headdresses, flamboyant fru-frus, copies of recent royal wedding dresses as well as several items donated by high profile Northumbrians. However, of much greater interest are the handmade, homemade and hand-me-downs.

A £3 guidebook tells their stories and showcases the bridal photographs. Many of the dresses were bought from Binns, Joplings, Paiges, Fenwicks or Bainbridges; **exhibit 3**, a 1926 gown, cost all of 35 shillings and 6 pence. **Exhibit 11** is a 1941 wedding dress, homemade by the bride using "black market" material. Sixty years later, she renewed her wedding vows wearing the same dress without any alterations. In fact, many of the exhibits sport 16-inch waists, and the organiser has struggled to find suitably slender modern mannequins.

A number of the dresses were homemade from Vogue or Butterwick patterns, but perhaps the most remarkable is **exhibit 35**: a 1970 wedding gown entirely crocheted from a "Woman's Weekly" pattern at a total cost of £8. For me though, the star of the show is a winter white, figure hugging, velvet gown, sadly never worn; the bride-to-be eloped with the chauffeur on the eve of her wedding to an MP.

Apart from this exhibition, Newcastle Cathedral is still worth a visit if you've had your fill of the city's retail, sport or culture. Devoid of seating, it is a cavernous exhibition space, eerily atmospheric and illuminated by glorious stained glass. There are state-of-the-art graphics, animations and audio light shows to enjoy, and a calorie "worth it" cafe to visit. Outside, in the refurbished churchyard, you can travel the ribbons, ponder the roundels, or just rest on the seats to absorb the history.

Anne Graham

Chocolate Quiz - Answers

Answer			
1	Carbon Dioxide	11	Forrest Gump
2	Joseph Fry	12	Hot Chocolate
3	Wispa Mint	13	Roald Dahl
4	Bourneville	14	Gene Wilder
5	20	15	Twix
6	35	16	Quality Street
7	Switzerland	17	Celebrations
8	TRUE	18	Matterhorn
9	Fruit	19	The family horse
10	The ears	20	8

Crossword Answers

ACROSS - 4 Larboard. 8 Vandal. 9 Look Away. 10 Biscuity. 11 Fiesta. 12 Meat Loaf. 13 Tyneside. 16 Brunette. 19 Vaulting. 21 Saddle. 23 Left Wing. 24 Showgirl. 25 Israel. 26 Adultery.

DOWN - 1 Matinee 2 Education. 3 Albino. 4 Lily Of The Valley. 5 Reoffend. 6 Orate. 7 Reacted. 14 Southward. 15 Etherise. 17 Reached. 18 Unended. 20 Unfair. 22 Dowel.

End Piece

Spring Tanaga

*When winter gives way to spring
 What will the new season bring?
 Swallows come back on the wing
 And the grass begins to sing*

Mary Atkinson