



Members Newsletter November 2023

A Message from the Chair

Hello everyone

In the September Newsletter, I rashly promised that our new sound system would be great. Sadly, I was wrong, because, as I admitted at the AGM, I had unfortunately let the wireless head mic transmitter battery go flat. Well, as I hope everyone who attended the AGM will agree, everything now works fine. In future, I will make sure there is a good supply of spare batteries available!

I can't believe it is already Autumn, with Christmas beginning to loom large on the horizon. But before then, of course, our interest groups continue to operate with their usual enthusiasm and energy. Do pay some a visit, perhaps a new one . You will find details on the Groups notice board at every monthly meeting

Finally, some good breaking news – Alnwick u3a has been given an Alnwick Civic Society Award. Full details will feature in our December edition.

Trevor Robinson, Chair

Contents

September Monthly Meeting	p2	Committee Members 2023/24	p17
October Monthly Meeting	p5	Your Committee Members	p18
Remaining Monthly Meetings 2023	p8	Seeking Committee Members	p20
Membership Renewals	p8	Animal Quiz	p21
Facebook Page	p8	Odds and Ends	p22
November photos	p9	Trip to Raby Castle	p23
Special u3a Meeting	p12	Animal Quiz Answers	p24
Safeguarding Officer	p12	End Piece	P24
Draft AGM Minutes	p13		

Monthly Meeting – 21st September 2023

Transatlantic Blues: 60's N.E. Music Scene

& the Civil Rights Movement

Presented by Professor Brian Ward

American Studies, Northumbria University

Some of you may recall that this time last year, Brian gave us a talk on the long connection between Newcastle and the Civil Rights movement in the US. He gave us a fascinating talk about some of the historic figures active in the abolitionist movement in Newcastle and the Northeast in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Roll forward 12 months, and this time Brian gave us a superb presentation on Transatlantic Blues in the NE in the 60's. It resonated with many in the audience, who remembered the early 60's Blues and Jazz scene in the Northeast very well.

He concentrated mainly on Eric Burdon, leader of The Animals, who supported US Blues Musicians, both in the USA and here in the UK. For example, he introduced Sonny Boy Williamson, a leading US Blues Singer, to British audiences.



In the USA, the music genre known as “The Blues” emerged from enslaved black people in the 19th Century. Inevitably, therefore, Blues music was associated with slavery and racial discrimination.

American blues became known in Britain from the 1930s onwards through a number of routes, including records brought to Britain, particularly by black GIs stationed there in the Second World War, and merchant seamen visiting ports such as London, Liverpool, Newcastle upon Tyne and Belfast.

September Monthly Meeting contd

The Animals were formed in Newcastle upon Tyne in the early 1960s. They were known for their deep-voiced frontman Eric Burdon and for their gritty, bluesy sound, exemplified by their signature song and transatlantic number-one hit single "The House of the Rising Sun" as well as by hits such as "We Gotta Get Out of This Place", and "Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood".



They balanced tough, rock-edged pop singles against rhythm-and-blues-oriented album material and were part of the British Invasion of the US. Burdon saw discrimination at first hand when he had a black girlfriend in the early days of the Animals - Doreen Caulker. He wrote a song for her called "For Miss Caulker".

The Animals toured the UK with US acts such as Bo Diddley. They recorded a song called "The Story of Bo Diddley" on their first LP in 1964. They also toured with John Lee Hooker (later to achieve wider fame as a performer in the movie "The Blues Brothers" in 1980).



September Monthly Meeting contd



In the early 1960's, Newcastle clubs regularly hosted black US blues performers, such as John Lee Hooker. For example, he performed at venues such as Club A'Gogo in Percy Street. The support act on the bill for the show shown on the left was John Mayell's Blues Breakers (a training ground for many of the British

blues musicians of the 60's and 70's, including Peter Green, Eric Clapton, Jack Bruce, John McVie and Mick Fleetwood

Tyneside was visited by three iconic African-Americans in or around this period. In 1967, the American civil rights leader Martin Luther King visited to accept an honorary doctorate from Newcastle University. His speech was the last he made outside the United States before his assassination in 1968.



Mohammed Ali visited in July 1977 for a four-day charity tour. In between these two icons, Jimi Hendrix (discovered by Chas Chandler, The Animal's bass guitarist) spent a lot of time in Newcastle, and became a close friend of Burdon.

Those visits put them in the context of two centuries of connections between Tyneside and the African American freedom struggle.

Trevor Robinson (fan of the Blues for around 60 years)

MONTHLY MEETING THURSDAY 19TH OCTOBER 2023

Humorous Observations of An Ex-RAF Officer

We were treated to a humorous talk by our own u3a member Ed Cartner cataloguing his 30 years in the RAF.

Ed, who had previously trained as a teacher, married his wife Liz in 1963 and decided to join the RAF. He was offered a Commission following a gruelling set of interviews at Biggin Hill, the arduous interviews were intended to develop leadership skills. He completed the interview process in central London on New Year's Day.



The officer training unit handed out a little blue book which explained what was expected of officer behaviour.



One evening following a Mess Dinner, Ed found himself outside his house with a loud hailer which he used to summon Liz to let him in, probably not what

was expected from a junior officer!

OCTOBER MEETING contd

Ed volunteered to join the Parachute Regiment and qualified as a Parachute Instructor.



During a demonstration with the Royal Marines in St Ives, he was asked to join in the exercise by jumping out of the helicopter into the sea. He would then be rescued by being winched back up into the helicopter, unfortunately his track suit

bottoms had become drenched from being in the sea and when he was winched up lost both the tracksuit and his underwear!

Formal Dinners in the Mess demanded compulsory attendance, formality was applied strictly, and protocol was to be observed to the letter. However, you could bring a guest if approval was sought.

The top table consisted of the Station Commander and his guest plus other higher-ranking officers. Ed, as a junior officer would be sitting "well below the salt" at the bottom end of the room. When the Station Commander questioned Ed about his guest he was angry because Ed's guest, his father a Senior police Officer ranked well above the Station Commanders guest. The seating then had to be rearranged quickly to admit Ed and his father to the top table.

OCTOBER MEETING contd

In 1977 Prince Charles, now King Charles III, was made Colonel in Chief of the Parachute Regiment. At Prince Charles own request he would only agree to become their Colonel in Chief if he was allowed to complete the parachute training course, he didn't want to wear the wings and maroon beret unless entitled to do so.

Ed, being responsible for parachute training, was tasked with training Prince Charles and Prince Andrew to parachute jump. He was invited to Windsor Castle where a suitable location was found within the grounds for ground training. This was to be followed up by a slideshow presentation, unfortunately an electric socket could not be found within the private apartments at Windsor, manually showing the slides was the only option.



Finally, this is a photo of Ed on a parachute jump.

After 30 years of service with the RAF, Ed has many tales to tell. He is the author of several illustrated books which detail his many exploits.

Maureen Sayers

Illustrations by Ed Cartner

Remaining Monthly Meetings in 2023

Nov 16th Sam Stephenson, Senior Coastguard, Seahouses
- “The work of the Coast Guard”

Dec 14th Martin Shingler, Senior Lecturer in Radio and
Film Studies, University of Sunderland - “Diana Dors: Film
Star, Actor and Paperback Writer”

Note that the December date is one week earlier than
normal, due to hall availability. The Christmas Social will
also take place on that day.

Membership Renewals

Enrolment for 2023/23 started on 1st September. There are
still a few members who at the time of writing have yet to
renew their membership. Downloadable membership
forms are on the website, at:-

<https://u3asites.org.uk/alnwick/page/130168>

Facebook Page

We have set up an Alnwick u3a Facebook Page. If you are
already on Facebook, just do a search. If not, point your
browser at the URL below:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/244523585224485>

November Photos

A selection of fungi photographed by Alnwick u3a member John Godfrey and found in North Northumberland this October. The identifications in some cases are tentative & might be wrong so alternative suggestions are welcome. 'Edible or not edible' that is the question but is not stated. However, BEWARE of poisonous lookalike versions of any edible mushroom; so John's general advice is 'don't go picking & don't go foraging' but leave for the pleasure of all. There are roughly 15,000 types of fungi growing wild in the UK so plenty to look out for.

LEGEND

1 - Bonnet Mushrooms
(*Psathyrella longipes*?)



2 - Common Puffball
(*Lycoperdon perlatum*)



3 - Fly Agaric (*Amanita Muscaria*)



November Photos contd

LEGEND

4 - Paxillaceae,
Tapinella or Uhm?



5 - Shaggy Ink Cap
(Coprinus
comatus)



6 - Shaggy Ink
Caps deliquescing



November Photos contd

LEGEND

7 - Shaggy
Parasol
(*Chlorophyllum
rhacodes*)



8 - Small bracket
mushroom-oozing
green algae
underneath



9 - Turkeytail
bracket (*Trametes
versicolor*)



Calling all photographers

As usual, the next Newsletter in early December will have a Christmas theme. Why not send me a Christmas photo for publication, at

Trevor.robinson2@btinternet.com

Special u3a Meeting - 29th September

How to Avoid Being Scammed

Chris Balfour gave a very useful talk on avoiding scams.

There are many types of scams that any of us can fall victim to; sadly, scams are becoming increasingly common:

- Doorstep scams
- Mail scams
- Phone scams
- Email and online scams
- Relationship scams
- Identity scams
- Investment, Banking and Pension scams

The good news is that there are ways to help avoid being taken in by a scam if you know what to look for.

Safeguarding Officer

My name is Carollyn McDonald and I hold the role of Safeguarding Officer in Alnwick u3a. I am available to listen to u3a members about any issues that have a safeguarding aspect. This includes domestic abuse; physical, emotional, financial and sexual abuse. It may not be possible to keep confidentiality, but disclosure could be made with your understanding to appropriate authorities, not other u3a members. I am a priest in the Church of England and have received full training.



Minutes of Alnwick u3a AGM held on 19th October 2023

WELCOME & APOLOGIES – Trevor welcomed everyone to the AGM and opened the meeting with apologies from Colin Gough, Eileen Peckham, Brian Greenhalge, Lalik Nasmyth, George Nasmyth, Jane Hall, Jean Findley, Anne Graham, Nancy Rudd, Anne Turner, Gordon Turner.

APPOINTMENT OF TWO TELLERS – Tom Burroughs and Pat Ashton

MINUTES OF OCT 2022 AGM - - The minutes of the AGM held on 20th October 2022 were accepted as a true record.

MATTERS ARISING – None.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT – Trevor Robinson welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked all members for their support throughout the year. He presented a PowerPoint display highlighting the events from the past year.

The photographs served as a reminder of how many interesting speakers we had and how many excellent days out we all enjoyed together.

Succession planning is a key part of a thriving u3a; at the next AGM several members will be leaving their posts on the committee. We will be looking to recruit new committee members during this coming year. Anyone who is unsure of what serving on the committee means is welcome to sit in on a committee meeting.

Minutes of AGM – contd

TREASURER'S REPORT - George Ellames presented the accounts for the year, which were accepted.

See Appendix (A) for the full Treasurer's report.

APPOINTMENT OF AN EXAMINER – Brian Ellis has agreed to examine the accounts for the following year.

ELECTION OF COMMITTEE - Trevor Robinson has completed three years on the committee and one year as Chair and is willing to stand for re-election.

Pat Ashton has completed seven years on the committee and is willing to continue.

George Ellames has completed five years on the committee and is willing to continue.

Carollyn Mc Donald has completed one year on the committee and is willing to continue.

Anne Mc Millan has completed three years on the committee and is willing to stand for re-election.

Kathy Platt has completed ten years on the committee and wishes to continue.

Maureen Sayers has completed two years on the committee and is willing to continue.

Shelley Willis who was co-opted onto the committee this year is willing to stand for election.

Minutes of AGM – contd

It was proposed that the following members be elected to serve on the committee: Trevor Robinson, Pat Ashton, George Ellames, Carollyn Mc Donald, Anne McMillan, Kathy Platt, Maureen Sayers, Shelley Willis.

Proposed: Sally Harrison

Seconded: Meryl McConnell

There being no other candidates, Trevor Robinson, Pat Ashton, George Ellames, Carollyn Mc Donald, Anne McMillan, Kathy Platt, Maureen Sayers and Shelley Willis were duly elected to serve as members of the Alnwick u3a Committee.

AOB – none

DATE OF THE NEXT AGM – 17th October 2024

Please note that these are DRAFT minutes, and will remain so until they are approved at the next AGM on 17th October 2024

Minutes of AGM – contd

Appendix A

ALNWICK U3A Financial Report 2022-23

<u>Income</u>	2022-23	2021-22	<u>Expenditure</u>	2022-23	2021-22
Subscriptions	£4545.5*	£4220.5	Room Hire	£3000	£3000
Raffle	£944.3**	£464.1	Capitation	£756	£716
Other	£823.03***	£470.82	Third Age Matters	£469.34	£460.93
			Speakers	£480	£180
			Printing	£384.60	£354.77
			Stationary/Postage	£14.32	£44.36
			Raffle Prizes	£58	£49.88
			Catering	£449.16	£285.68
			Equipment	£636.29	£821.82
			CLA Licence	£64.2	£60
			Others	£82.99	£149
Total	£6312.83	£5155.42	Total	£6394.9	£6122.44
Surplus	£-82.07	£-967.02	Balance carried forward to 2023-234	£2308.35 (+£30.32 petty cash)	
			Balance end 2022-23	£2392.42 (+ £30.32 petty cash)	

*this sum represents 196 members, some at reduced rate

**this sum reflects increase in suggested Donation at Monthly Meetings from January

***this sum includes a Grant of £150 from the Third Age Trust for Display materials

We report that the income and expenditure for the year ending 31st August 2023 is in accordance with the record given above.

Signed:



G Ellames

Date:

10/10/23


Signed:



B Ellis

Date:

9/10/2023.

2310.35 

Committee Members 2023/24

Your Committee members are elected annually at the Annual General Meeting, which this year was held on 19th October.

Committee roles, listed below, were agreed at the meeting of the Committee held on 6th November 2023.

Trevor Robinson	Chair (and Newsletter Editor) chair.u3a.alnwick@gmail.com
Carollyn McDonald	Vice Chair (and Safeguarding Officer)
Maureen Sayers	Secretary secretary.alnwick.u3a@gmail.com
George Ellames	Treasurer
Pat Ashton	Membership Secretary membership.alnwick.u3a@gmail.com
Anne McMillan	Groups Coordinator groups.alnwick.u3a@gmail.com
Kathy Platt	Speaker Secretary
Shelley Willis	Member

Your Committee Members

This is a feature where Committee members say a bit about themselves. This month it is **Pat Ashton**, your Membership Secretary.

I was brought up in the suburbs of Manchester in the early 50's. Everything was grey and black, bombed out sites, blackened buildings, pea soupers in the winter –smog for the uninitiated!

At 18 I wanted to get away as far as possible so went to Exeter to study Geography.

What a contrast. One could see hills and green fields from the city centre and walk out to the countryside. In my final year I studied Urban Geography and discovered Town Planning. What a revelation

As a female, job opportunities were very limited in the early 70's; secretary, teacher perhaps librarian, none of which appealed but Town Planning sounded exciting. However I had had enough of studying so I wrote to as many local authorities as I could and landed a job in Liverpool.

Now, living in Manchester, one may have thought I had been to Liverpool before but I hadn't and was in for a shock. I was used to bomb damage and dereliction but Liverpool was even worse than Manchester. All along the river front lay the abandoned and derelict docklands – the Planning Office was on the River Front opposite the Pierhead.

However, the Planning Office was exciting and buzzing place and under the dirt, dereliction and neglect, Liverpool had a wealth of attractive old buildings. I was lucky, changes were in the air. Instead of mass clearances, Liverpool was spearheading General Improvement Areas where residents were supported by the Local Authority to improve their homes, putting in modern bathroom and kitchen extensions to terraces houses, providing open areas for play and recreation in tightly packed terraced areas etc. There was an air of possibilities and potential. A private owner's plans to fill in the Albert Docks were averted!

Your Committee Members - contd

Although only a lowly junior planner dealing with house extensions I learnt what real planning is about – development for the public benefit, not private greed. After 3 years in Liverpool – which I loved - I went to London to get fully qualified and met a fellow student who is now a good friend. In the mid 70's she did her dissertation on the scrapyards which were all along the river frontage in the derelict docks – 30 years later she was Head of Transportation in the London Docklands.

After becoming qualified I headed back 'up north' getting a job in Manchester, married and lived in Oldham. I enjoyed Town Planning, and was lucky enough to work when there was enormous change taking place, the transformation of derelict docklands and urban spaces into vibrant places to work and live and the recognition of our built and countryside heritage, such as the Albert Docks, London Docklands.

After 40 years working in 6 Local Authorities I finally retired, enjoyed – and still do - gardening, walking some voluntary work and finally moved to Northumberland in 2016 – and love it.

I knew no one but after walking along the coast 40 years before with my husband, and then later St Cuthbert's Way and Northumberland Inn Way I'd learnt how amazing this county is, the coast, the Cheviots it's history and of course the people. I joined Alnwick u3a a few months after moving here – never having been a u3a member before – and then volunteered to be a Committee Member what more is there to say?

I wonder now how I had the time to work as I'm out enjoying the many activities that Alnwick u3a has to offer and learning so much.

Seeking New Committee Members

As mentioned at the AGM, we will need new committee members by this time next year, as some of the existing members will be standing down.

Committee Member is a very interesting role and you would be helping our u3a to continue to operate for the benefit of our membership. Why not have a chat with one of the current Committee members (see p.18)?

You can also find a lot of information about being a Committee member on the national u3a website at:

<https://sources.u3a.org.uk/recruitment/bigger-and-better-u3a-committees>

The future of Alnwick u3a is dependent on members coming forward to help in a variety of ways, whether that be helping in the hall at the monthly meetings or sending articles to the newsletter, for example.

Every contribution, no matter how small, helps to make Alnwick u3a a more vibrant group.

Animal Quiz (Courtesy of Shelley Willis)

- 1 What was the first animal launched into space ?
- 2 What is a baby puffin known as ?
- 3 What colour skin does a polar bear have ?
- 4 What type of mammal is sometimes known as a sea cow ?
- 5 What is a group of peacocks called ?
- 6 What's the quickest way to tell the difference between a monkey and an ape ?
- 7 A giraffe has the same number of bones in its neck as a human. True or false ?
- 8 Where in its body are a lobster's teeth located ?
- 9 What is a group of frogs called ?
- 10 What is the largest type of dolphin ?
- 11 For how long is an elephant's pregnancy ?
- 12 If you keep a goldfish in a dark room, it will become pale. True or false ?
- 13 What type of fish is the only one to swim in an upright position ?
- 14 Which animals does an entomologist study ?
- 15 What is a group of ferrets called ?
- 16 Butterflies have taste receptors in their feet. True or false ?
- 17 What type of animal is a Flemish giant ?
- 18 What is a baby oyster known as ?
- 19 Which is the only bird that can fly backwards ?
- 20 Sea otters hold hands while they're sleeping, so they don't drift apart. True or false ?

Odds and Ends

My mind is like a browser. Thirty tabs are open. Five are frozen. And I have no idea where the music is coming from.

I saw an envelope on my doorstep that said "Do Not Bend". I stood there for ages, trying to work out how I was going to pick it up.

No man is an island.
Apart from Barry.
Barry is an island.

I heard that a barber had been arrested for dealing in drugs.

I was really surprised.

I've been going to him for years.

I didn't know he was also a barber.

"I find television very educational. Every time someone turns on the set, I go into the other room and read a book."

Goucho Marx

NASA is launching a new mission to say sorry to the aliens.

They are calling it Apollo-G

Architecture Trip to Raby Castle – 28th September

The coach took us to Raby Castle, in County Durham, which was built by John Neville, 3rd Baron Neville de Raby, in the 14th Century. It has been altered several times since



then and is a very impressive sight.



Inside the castle a well laid-out roped walkway ensures that all available rooms are visited and showed the stark difference from the very grand upper floor rooms, through the kitchen, and to the servants dining hall (which was very reminiscent of scenes from Downton Abbey).



A lot of the rooms had friendly guides giving us information on the history of the castle and its content – including stunning chandeliers, portraits of the Neville



family, and various objects d'art, such as five live-size porcelain bird figurines.



Thankfully, although cloudy, the rain held off, so we were able to explore some of the 200 acres of deer park that the castle is situated in,



where there are several herds of deer wandering about.

So many thanks to Peter Carter for a very well organised and enjoyable trip.

Shelley Willis

Animal Quiz Answers

- 1 A monkey.
- 2 A puffling, or chick.
- 3 Black.
- 4 A manatee.
- 5 A muster.
- 6 Monkeys have tails, apes don't.
- 7 True.
- 8 In its stomach.
- 9 An army.
- 10 An orca (killer whale)
- 11 95 weeks.
- 12 True.
- 13 A seahorse.
- 14 Insects.
- 15 A business.
- 16 True.
- 17 A rabbit.
- 18 A spat.
- 19 A hummingbird.
- 20 True.

End Piece

*The fishing boats are at rest
Seaweed sleeps on the shore
Where birds ponder and walkers wander.
A cormorant watches from the rocks
As a group perform Qi Jong
To the rhythm of the waves
And the sky smiles.*

Mary Atkinson