

Cestria u3a at Chester- le-Street

Website – www.u3asites.org.uk/cestria

March 2024 Newsletter

Monthly Meetings

**1st Wednesday of
month Cornerstones
Methodist Chapel
9.30- 10.00 Pre
Meeting Coffee &
Chat....10.00-Noon
Main Meeting.**

Speakers

**6th March.....
The Boy's Brigade...
Derick Lawson**

**3rd April
How our Brains
Produce Dreams...
Robert Pullen**

**1st May.....
One Man Went to War
....Graham Carling**

**5th June.....
Gateshead Little
Theatre.....Judith
Carruthers**

**3rd July...
Music of Jerome Kern
& Cole Porter**

From the Editor



At last I get the chance to say 'Happy New Year' to everyone. I hope you've all stayed happy and busy ... although the weather has been grim. We now look forward to Spring. Also, the Year of the Dragon was celebrated in February, so I hope that is lucky for you. The Dragon, also known as Loong, is the fifth of the twelve year cycle of animals

which appear in the Chinese zodiac related to the Chinese calendar. The Year of the Dragon is associated with the Earthly Branch symbol (wood) and pronounced *chen*.

No Chairman's Corner this month, as we are awaiting our new Chairman Mike Parker to get his feet under the table, before he starts his column for our newsletter.

I was very late for our February AGM, due to unforeseen circumstances, but I did get there after the voting in of the new Chairman and Committee, which I hear went very smoothly. So, congratulations to Mike and many thanks to Robert for all his hard work, of five years, as Chairman. Although, Robert reminded me he will still be around to say hello to everyone.

We are hoping for a busy 2024 as a u3a. At the time of writing, events being organised are a Japanese Meal and a trip to the ballet. Plus our regular Friday 5 mile walks, 2 shorter Wednesday walks monthly and a Coffee and Amble on the third Friday of each month. So watch out for these on the website, bulletin board and White Card..... come and join us!!

.....Christine Logan

Interest Group Diary

Monday	Discussion Group	10.00am - 3rd Monday
Tuesday	Wine Appreciation	2.00pm - 2nd Tuesday
Wednesday	Family History	10.00am - 2nd Wed.
	Good Read Group	2.00pm - Last Wed.
	Midweek Walks	10.00am - 2nd & 4th Wed.
Thursday	Board Games	2.00pm - 2nd Thursday
	History	10.15am - 2nd Thursday
	Mah Jong	10.00am - 1st & 3rd Thurs.
Friday	Coffee and Amble	10.30am - 3rd Friday
	Walking Group	10.00am every Friday

Others

History & Nature Walks Various Days and Months

Lunch Club Various Days and Months

Theatre Group Various Days and Months

Contacts for the above from our White Cards or Website.

Meet our new Chairman.....



Hello everyone. I am Mike Parker. I have been asked by Christine Logan to write a bit about myself. Since I always (usually, sometimes) do as I'm asked here it is.

I grew up near Stockport. I lived in the Durham area for a while in the 1970s then my wife Nina and I lived for 35 years in Heckington, Lincolnshire. If you are passing on the A17, the village has a unique 8-sailed windmill. I was a schoolteacher for most of my time there, then later I was a

Forecourt Shift Operator at a local garage. It sounds grand, but it isn't.

I was involved with the local swimming club for many years on poolside and on the committee. That lapsed when the pool closed in 2012 for a major refit. Nina and I started Scottish dancing locally, which we have continued since we moved up to Durham. We also enjoy sequence dancing.

We moved up here in 2015 to be with family, our family ties in Lincolnshire having ended. Specifically, our grandson had recently been born and it doesn't look as though there will be any more. Incidentally, I did ask him what I could put in this piece but all he offered was "You're silly, Grandad". Out of the mouths of babes....

We are pleased we joined the u3a. We take part in the History group and the Coffee and Amble group. We also recommend the History and Nature walks organised by Margaret Bozic. The group leaders put in time behind the scenes which deserves more credit. One aspect of the u3a that I am keen on encouraging is the sociability that we get from being with others.

I look forward to meeting more members during my term of office as Chairman.



DISCUSSION GROUP-2024

Meeting 10am

Chester le Street Library

Date	Topic	Topic Leader
19 th February	Immigration issues/Rwanda Solution	
18 th March	Ukraine – Problems, Issues And Concerns	
15 th April	Transportation in Cities/Public Transport/War on Motorists	
20 th May	Free Speech/Wokeness/Being Offended/The Right to Demonstrate	
17 th June	NHS Reform/Fit for Purpose ?/ Access to Health Care for Older People	
15 th July	The Future of the English Language	
19 th August	Should Older People Continue to Receive Benefits (Bus pass/Triple Lock etc) when others are subject to benefit Cuts ?	
16 th September	What forms your Opinion ?	
21 st October	Are Government Enquiries a Waste of Time and Money ?	
18 th November	Do a minority of people with extreme views assume they speak for the majority? The role of media influencers/Social Media on Public Opinion	
16 th December	Planning meeting/ Discussion on Current Affairs	

Note: Every meeting will include a brief discussion on Current Affairs.

For more details, please contact Robert Berry (beeryr99@aol.com)



Greatest Days.....

I wasn't too certain on booking this Production many months ago for Cestria u3a. It definitely had mixed reviews. My enjoyment of the Take That Band music came from family some years ago – and I sang along with it, caught up in the enthusiasm (now I sing to Taylor Swift songs etc)!

Themes such as friendship, love, loss and laughter were explored loosely alongside about 15 songs from the 'Boys' (as the Take That Band are named in the Production). It was an excellent mix of songs, music arrangement and dance music. The set was quite bare (as one member of the group commented) except with the moving stairs/lights nearer the

end. However, the energy of the performers was incredible to watch and enjoy whilst the live Band ensured a 'good feel' to the story.

The Production ended with a powerful finale whilst some of us, and those around us, could stand, sing and shout. As we left, many of us were on a 'high' and had enjoyed a 'great day' at the Theatre.

As yet I have not had the opportunity to hear the views of those in the Group - but feel these may be 'mixed'. For myself I enjoyed the event and it was great to see so many younger folk in the Theatre – shouting, singing and waving arms.

Wonder what our next Great Day will be with the Theatre Group??

.....Anne Lanigan

Yes, it was a fantastic afternoon out, thanks Anne. I believe the next time will be to the ballet 'Sleeping Beauty', again Sunderland Empire, in March. We look forward to the review.

Christmas Lunch 2023.....

Lumley Castle provided a spectacular setting for Cestria u3a's Christmas lunch 2023. The delightful Scarborough Room was a lovely private space for an excellent meal. My sun-dried tomato tartare, roast beef and tarte au citron were all delicious and members with other menu choices also reported enjoying their meals. I found the service timely and efficient.

Fourteenth century architecture, while spectacular, does not always provide the cosiest of settings with some members reporting cool drafts, counteracted to some degree by the warmth of company and conversation.

Thanks go as usual to Anne Lanigan for organising the lovely event. Anne had to work especially hard due to the proprietors of the Castle going into administration after she had booked, having to deal initially with the administrators and then with the new owners who took over just before our lunch. A diner, however, would not have been aware of these issues while enjoying a delightful lunch and excellent company.

.....Steve Willan

Tilery and Brierly Woods Walk.....2nd February.....



Stunning skies for our 6 mile Friday walk through Tilery and Brierly Woods and along the Castle Eden Walkway to Embleton. Windy weather but unusually warm for a February walk and a great turnout today.



The woods form part of the Wynard Country Park.

Excellent turnout lunch, coffee and cheese scones at the Green Lane Nursery and Tea Barn- sister coffee shop to the Tea Barn at Pity Me.

Thanks Angela . 🧐👢👢

.....Lyn Cutter and Marilyn Fox

Committee 2024

Honorary President – Robert Berry

- **Chair:** Mike Parker
- **Treasurer:** Tony Morrell
- **Secretary:** Margaret Pescod
- **Groups:** Anne Lanigan
- **Membership:** Pat Rule
- **Newsletter:** Christine Logan
- **Speakers:** Margaret Chilver
- **Website Admin:** Steve Willan
- Kathleen Atkinson
- Margaret Bozic
- Rachael Burton
- David Easton
- Angela Hamilton
- Maureen Weston

Contacts for the above from our White Cards or Website.

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Cestria u3a at Chester-Le-Street is a Registered Charity no1163334

Cestria u3a (University of the Third Age) is an autonomous, self-help organisation run by the voluntary efforts of its members.

*It is a member of the Third Age Trust (a Registered Charity) which is its national support and advisory body.
The word "university" is used in its original sense of people coming together to share and pursue learning in all its form aims to encourage and enable older people no longer in full-time paid employment to help each other to share their knowledge educational, cultural, recreational, physical and social.*