

## In Contact



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### Editorial

Welcome to the first In Contact of 2023. I start on a sad note by reporting the death of one of our members. Some of you will know Edith Gilderoy. She was a member of the Quiz group and the Circle Dancing group. Unfortunately, Edith became ill and contracted pneumonia. She died in hospital in the early hours of 15<sup>th</sup> December. I have sent condolences to her family on our behalf. Her funeral is on January 6<sup>th</sup> at 1.30pm at Sacriston Methodist Church.

We had a grand time at our annual Christmas Dinner at the Honest Lawyer and enjoyed a prize draw and a fun quiz. Many thanks to Theresa Mulkerrin for organising everything. Although only around 30 people came it felt really good to get back to doing these things that are so much a part of marking the important events of the year.

The picture above is, of course, of the Three Wise Men or The Magi, or the Three Kings, however you like to think of them. Traditionally, they arrive at Epiphany or Twelfth Night. This is not a festival much celebrated in this country, although it is a big deal in parts of Europe. Even Shakespeare's play *Twelfth Night* is not actually about Twelfth Night. Perhaps we should revive it and have a party to celebrate the last night of the festive season. If you are interested to see what a Tudor Christmas was like and the Twelfth Night Festivities, you could catch up on iPlayer with Lucy Worsley.

A bit of news for you. I have now put a link on the website on the Events page to the Calendar which shows all the upcoming group activities – at least those we know about so far. So, a plea to Group leaders – if you are able to access Beacon please put your forward programme on the schedule. If not, please contact the Group Co-ordinator, Paul Newby.

*Tina Naples Editor*

## Monthly Meeting

From this month we shall be meeting in a smaller room at Bowburn. It still has a kitchen attached thank goodness! It still has the usual screen and projection facilities. Hopefully, it will be a bit warmer, less echoey and with easier acoustics. I am pleased to say that a loop system is available throughout the building for those who wear hearing aids. So do please use it if you can.

We also as promised offered to try and arrange lifts for those who need them. Don't forget to contact Maureen Craik if this is something you need or could offer, and we will try and match people. [mcraik-40@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:mcraik-40@hotmail.co.uk). We shall also be providing a brief note as to what the monthly talk is about.

## News from the Music Appreciation Group

The group meets in Carrville Methodist Church and every Christmas, groups that use the Church are invited to decorate a tree. Here is a picture of our group's tree looking very resplendent.



This is a very successful and well-loved group. Why not give them a go?

## From Paul Newby

### So just what is an Interest Group Coordinator and what do they do?



Hello everyone,

My name is Paul Newby and I want to introduce myself to members and to let you know that I have recently taken over from Anne Bothwell as the new group coordinator for Durham u3a. I've been asked by a couple of people just what does a group coordinator do and how can this role add value to u3a Durham? A very good question so I thought it might be useful to highlight some aspects of the role and how it impacts on members and the various interest groups we have in the Durham u3a.

By way of some background, I joined u3a a little over a year ago after retiring from a 30-year career in drug development and higher education and moving back to Durham. I was keen to make new friends and feed my various interests in history and learn new things. U3a seemed like an excellent fit and I must admit that I am quite amazed at the number and range of groups available to members. Plus of course the incredibly friendly and welcoming members I have met.

Interest groups are at the heart of what u3a is all about and I am keen to do everything I can to help support and grow the different groups we have in the Durham u3a. Plus of course making new friends who share common interests along the way.

As a group coordinator my job is to help anyone interested in setting up a new interest group and to support and advise existing group leaders. My experience gained in establishing the Film Club group last year should come in handy I'm hoping. So, if you have any ideas for new groups or for increasing membership of existing groups please get in touch and let me know. I know that the philosophy club is currently on hold. If anyone is interested in helping to re-establish this group, please get in touch. I can also share that a new cycling group is being considered and details will be announced in the new year. In addition, if your existing interest group would like to increase membership or simply advertise monthly events - again please get in touch. We can use Beacon to schedule monthly events and I am happy to help load any 2023 schedules into Beacon. These dates are then transferred into our

website for everyone to see what is coming up. For members who prefer hard copy information group notices are available at the general monthly meetings in Bowburn along with announcements from group leaders and me.

Another important part of the role is to ensure good communication between group leaders, members, the committee and of course u3a as a whole. I am all set up on Beacon and able to help if you need any information or news passing on to the wider membership or committee. In January I am taking a course on how to get more out of Beacon. If anyone is a little rusty with Beacon or is interested in learning more about how the system works, please let me know and I will see if I can arrange some training with the Beacon team.

Recently Tina Naples contacted group leaders to ask for feedback from members about how to improve the monthly general meetings. A big thank you to everyone who made suggestions. A number of points were raised, all of which were discussed at the November committee meeting and outcomes shared in a recent In Contact. Do let me know if you think of any other items to help improve the monthly meetings and I will pass them on to the committee for further discussion.

With 2023 in mind, I look forward to meeting the various group leaders and if possible, to coming along to the different groups to meet members. I am also keen to liaise with my opposite number in the Dunelm group to help share the wide variety of interest groups across our two chapters.

Please come up and introduce yourself if you see me at one of our monthly meetings at Bowburn. I will wear my name badge to help with this.

I look forward to meeting you and do feel free to get in touch if I can help you or your interest group with anything in the meantime. I can be reached via Beacon or directly via my email address which is [newbypaul51@gmail.com](mailto:newbypaul51@gmail.com)

Best wishes for a very happy and healthy 2023,  
Paul Newby.

## **Poetry Group**

We had a shaky start on zoom-only three of us keen enough to try. We were often reduced to a twosome and cancelled such occasions. However last October the three of us decided to give the Gala Coffee Shop a try. Due to illness we only met twice- Mike Gibbs and myself plus a new member an Iranian lady who was very welcome. Now we are hoping for a full complement of four plus a new-to-us lady who describes herself as we do, keen poetry lovers.

We would love to have new folk come along to try us out- either just to listen or read whatever they have found on the theme, or indeed have written. The theme for January 9<sup>th</sup> is Water- however and whatever way you would like to interpret it. We meet on the second Monday of each month at 2.00pm in the Gala Coffee Shop. Costs nothing except perhaps for a coffee or cup of tea. Our new member has found a quiet spot for us to occupy but initially we will meet in the foyer before going there. We have copied programmes for you to peruse so do come and try us. We would love to see you.

Ivy Hudson

*The poetry group programme is also now on the website. Follow the link from the Events page. Ed.*

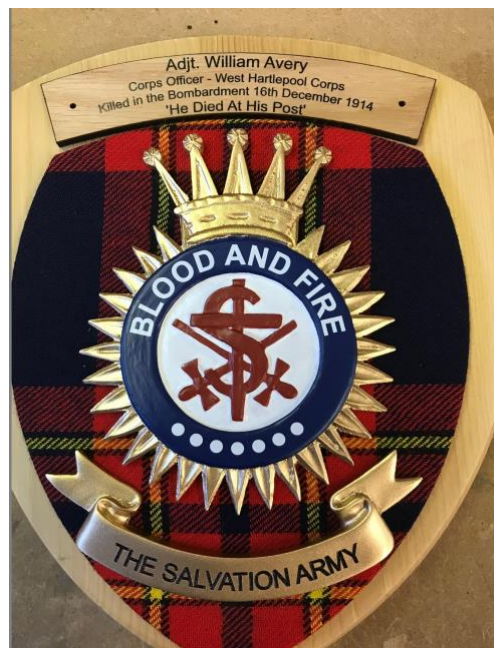
## **From James Gilman**

108 years ago on the 16<sup>th</sup> December 1914, the German navy shelled the seaport of Hartlepool, killing or injuring some 144 civilians. Among those killed was my maternal grandfather, Adjutant William Avery, Commanding Officer of the Hartlepool Salvation

Army Corps. He was the first civilian in Britain to be killed in the First World War, whose death made headline news in the national Press and was reported as far afield as in the Sydney Morning Herald in Australia. He was a national hero, whose death inspired thousands of young men next day to rush to their local recruitment office and sign up to join the British Army to fight Germany on the European battlefields.

There is a military museum established on Hartlepool's Headland on the spot where the assault took place: the HEUGH BATTERY MUSEUM. This museum houses a collection of regimental plaques from British Army Regiments who fought in the two World Wars. My grandfather was a soldier, albeit in a different kind of Army; he died at his post, as is inscribed on his gravestone; he was given a military funeral with his body conveyed to the cemetery on a gun carriage with troops lining the roads; the funeral procession was led by the Mayor of Hartlepool, and the service conducted by The Salvation Army's most senior officer (under the General).

The Heugh Battery Museum invited me to present a plaque in honour of my grandfather, to join the military plaques in their display, and this is what the presentation was all about today, with senior Salvation Army officer in attendance, as well as the BBC as well as the Hartlepool Mail newspaper.



*If you didn't see Look North on 19<sup>th</sup> December after the 10pm news – you might be able to see it on the iplayer. Alternatively, James has provided a couple of links. Ed.*

<https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/news/officer-killed-ww1-honoured-hartlepool-museum>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m001gcw9/look-north-north-east-and-cumbria-evening-news-19122022>

## What's on in January

You can also consult the Groups section on the website and contact Group Convenors from the Contacts page.

This month's talk is mainly about social problems in the North East following the end of WW2.

12.1.23 Citizens Advice Bureau in the 1950s.	Durham Monthly Meeting	Bowburn Community Centre	1.30 for 2.00pm
26.1.23 The Horsekeepers Daughter. Jane Lowes.	Dunelm Monthly Meeting	Bowburn Community Centre	1.30 for 2.00pm (Take membership card)
9.1.23 The Rock of Tanios by Amin Maalouf	Book Group	Contact Terry Birchmore for venue on 0191 378 0563	10.00 am monthly.
Every three weeks	German	Contact George Schlesinger for venue on 0191 384 9056	
3.1.23	Topical Discussion	The Beefeater, Broomside Park.	10.00 am monthly.
Winter break	Walking Group	Contact Ken Naples or see the website for details. 07711 979098	10.30 am
Wednesday 2.00 pm and Monday 10.30 am (Conversation)	Middling French	The Gala Cafe	Both meetings weekly
12.1.23	Circle Dancing	Sacriston Methodist Church	1.00 pm monthly.
Thursdays at 9.45 am. Restarts 5.1.23.	French	Contact Elizabeth Morgan for venue on 0191 384 6874.	9.45 am <u>weekly</u> except 2nd Thursday
9.1.23. Water	Poetry	Gala Theatre Cafe	2.00 pm monthly
12.1.23	Shakespeare Study	Gala Theatre Café	10.15 am
16.1.23. Gaudy Night by Dorothy L Sayers	Monday Crime Club	Lanchester Garden Centre	10.30 am monthly
18.1.23	Scrabble	Contact Maureen Craik for venue on 0191 371 9521	2.00 pm monthly
28.1.23. Joy's January Jazz	Music Appreciation	Carrville Methodist Church	2.00 pm monthly
Check with Sylvia	Pub Lunch	Variable arrangements. Contact Sylvia Buxton on 0191 373 1644	As Arranged

3.1.23 Maltese History	History	Sacriston Methodist Church	2pm monthly
16.1.23	Quiz	Sacriston Methodist Church	2pm monthly
23.1.23 'The King of the World'	History Too	Sacriston Methodist Church	10.00 am monthly
As Arranged	Cinema	Odeon Cinema, Durham Contact Paul Newby on 07814 518100.	As Arranged

**And Finally.....**

Don't forget you can contact me at the address below if you have something to contribute. I have space in the next edition. I wish you all a very happy and healthy 2023.

Tina Naples ([tina.naples@aol.com](mailto:tina.naples@aol.com))