

Chat from the Chair



We are looking forward to returning to the Pavilion for our monthly meetings on the second Thursday morning in the month. Our speaker for the morning of **10th February** is **Gary Holpin** on '**A photographic journey around the amazing South West Coast Path**'. See page 2. Gary was recommended by Teignmouth u3a and I am sure this will be a splendid session and will inspire us to explore the South West coast path.

In our 10th anniversary year I know that many of our Interest Groups will certainly be celebrating 10 years of activity. Walking Group 1 for example are planning an anniversary walk replicating their very first walk to and around Lypstone. Do let us know what you are doing; we would love to see some articles in our newsletter. Lyn Holmes, our Groups Coordinator keeps us well informed and it is definitely good to hear about new groups starting.

Also do look at the report by the Social Committee on page 3 to find out what is going on. As ever my thanks to Alice Robson, Lyn Holmes, Clare Dawson and Jenny Comben for organising a variety of events. I for one will look forward to seeing photographs of the bird watching cruise on the Exe.

Last August the u3a announced the appointment of their new Chair <https://www.u3a.org.uk/latest-news/1171-the-u3a-movement-announce-its-new-chair>. It is a special year for us and the u3a nationally celebrating 40 years. Do look at our programme of events in last month's newsletter and the events being planned for the next couple of months on pages 5 and 6, and put the dates in your diaries. **National u3a week** this year is from **17th to 26th September**. So lots to look forward to.

With best wishes,

*Christine Chittock,
Chair and Speakers' Coordinator*

Next monthly meeting: Thursday 10 February 2022 – in Exmouth Pavilion and on Zoom



We are very pleased to say that we are returning to Exmouth Pavilion for our next monthly meeting on Thursday 10 February 2022 from 10:00 for a 10:30 start. We will also be streaming this simultaneously live on Zoom for any members who are unwilling or unable to attend in person and instead wish to join us from home. Zoom connection details are on page 5.



The subject is 'A Photographic Journey Around the South West Coastal Footpath', by Gary Holpin.



Devon photographer Gary Holpin describes how a walk along the South West Coastal Path **transformed** his life. He is a semi-professional Landscape Photographer, passionate about Devon and the South West and specialises in vibrant coastal scenes.

Arrangements for the meeting in the Pavilion

When attending The Pavilion in person, as a committee we felt you would like to be reminded:

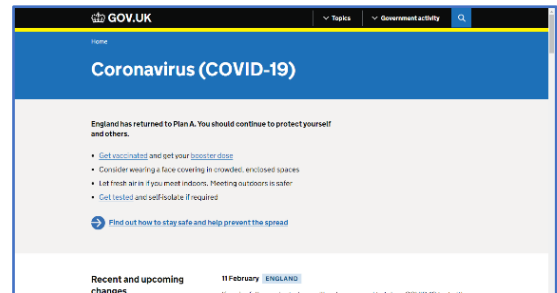
1. That your safety is uppermost in our minds.
2. Committee members and Meeters and Greeters wearing lanyards will be present to greet you, to answer any queries and to ensure the smooth running of the meeting.
3. After discussions with the management at the Pavilion and having held additional committee meetings to discuss the safety arrangements we ask you to consider the following points:

- Do not attend if you are feeling unwell or have any symptoms of Covid-19 or have tested positive for Covid-19.
- Lateral Flow Test: We recommend that you undertake a lateral flow test (LFT) on the morning of our monthly meeting and as close to the meeting as possible, and attend if you have a negative result. To avoid queues, we will take it on trust that you have undertaken an LFT.
- Masks: We strongly recommend that you wear a face covering at all times (unless you are exempt)
- Ventilation: Windows and some doors will be left open to ensure good ventilation. Therefore we recommend wearing warm clothing.
- Hand sanitisers will be available but you may wish to bring your own. Please use these as appropriate.
- Social Distancing: Respect other people's personal space whilst moving around the hall and selecting your seat.
- Seating: Do make use of all available seating.
- Contacting us: Should any member test positive for Covid-19 after the meeting, contact Olwen Smith by email or by phone as soon as possible. This will enable us to contact all those who attended if necessary.

Thank you for taking the time to read this important information and we look forward to seeing you on 10 February. And some good news is that the Pavilion Café is now operating a loyalty card system, offering a free coffee or tea after 10 purchases. More details and the loyalty cards are available direct from the Pavilion Café.

Covid-19 information

Government website: The position on Covid-19 and the impact of the Omicron variant is constantly changing. As always, we advise everyone to continue to keep fully informed on the latest national information, guidance and support on Covid-19 by referring to the official government website – <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>.



Devon County Council website: Guidance from Devon County Council is at

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/coronavirus-advice-in-devon/> – and note especially “Continuing to wear face coverings in crowded and enclosed settings is a small action you can take to protect yourself and others”.

Hybrid meetings: For those who remain reluctant to join groups which are meeting indoors, the option of running groups as hybrid meetings using Zoom works very well and allows everyone to join in. More details are on our Connect & Learn website at <https://sites.google.com/view/connectandlearn/videocalls>.

Group news

January has been a very low-key month for group news. I think that many of the groups have been functioning as usual where permitted. However, with the news that most restrictions are to be lifted soon and spring being around the corner let's hope for a better February. I have had a few new groups that are about to start and will keep you posted. I am hoping to send a new group list out shortly.



Lyn Holmes,
Groups Coordinator
groups@exmouthu3a.org.uk

Social Group News

The Social Committee's write-up in last month's newsletter ended on a positive note and it is to be hoped this month's will continue in the same vein. Firstly our long awaited **post-Christmas lunch** is on the horizon and will take place on **17th February at the Royal Beacon Hotel**, and we look forward to seeing you there. The popular **bird-watching trip on the Stuart Line boat** will be taking place on **28th February** and, as previously mentioned, this is fully booked. Hopefully the weather will be kind to us but regardless the boat staff have always proved to be very welcoming and it is anticipated that this trip will also come up to their very high standard of hospitality. Don't forget to 'wrap up warm' as the temperature can seem even colder on board.

Also there is a coffee morning and an afternoon tea being arranged for March and specific dates will be notified as soon as confirmation has been received. On the last occasion we had of this type of get-together, it proved extremely successful and was very well received, so hopefully we can repeat this experience.

As we all gradually emerge from lock-down conditions, the Social Committee are going full-steam ahead with making enquiries regarding details of planned excursions and it is anticipated more precise information on some of these will be available for next month, and of course, as soon as it is received and confirmed you will all be notified.

Alice Robson, Lyn Holmes, Clare Dawson and Jenny Comben – Social Committee

Group News – Bird Watching Group 2:

Bird Watching Group 2 had a bird watching trip around Ludwell Valley on Wednesday 19th January.

Despite the threat of rain, 12 members of BWG2 set off to Ludwell Valley Park in Exeter. It wasn't too muddy and we were pleasantly surprised to have blue skies and sun which certainly enhanced our sightings of the birds. These included teal, wren, robin, song thrush, great tit, chaffinch, long-tailed tits, jays, blackbirds, starlings, goldfinch, grey wagtail and a dipper.

Liz Geach, Member

Winter in Switzerland – from Ian McLauchlin



Details of monthly meetings for 2022 – our 10th Anniversary Year

You are most welcome to join us for our monthly meetings at **10:00 for a 10:30 start to approx. 11:45**. These are usually in **Exmouth Pavilion**. When we meet in the Pavilion, we have a 'Link Up' table in the Pavilion Café for new and recent members; a chance to get together and have a chat and find out more about our u3a. Our Social Committee is in the main hall and you can find out about forthcoming activities and outings. Please see our newsletters and emails with details of our arrangements with regard to Covid-19. We will keep you informed of any changes (see our website at <https://u3asites.org.uk/exmouth/events>). We have a most interesting programme for our anniversary year including many references to Devon.

Our monthly meetings in the Pavilion are now also streamed live on Zoom simultaneously for any members who are unwilling or unable to attend in person and instead wish to join us from home.

In addition to our monthly meetings in the Pavilion and on Zoom, we also have presentations on the fourth Thursday in the month are at 10:15 for 10:30 to 11:30 via Zoom only.

The connection details for the monthly meetings and for these Zoom presentations and for all our other u3a meetings are in the members edition of this newsletter and are also sent direct to members by email. This is for u3a members only, so please don't share these Zoom details with anyone else. If you experience difficulties, email John Hunt at johnh@exmouthu3a.org.uk. In the unlikely event that we are having problems with this link at the time, please keep an eye on your email inbox at the time for further information.

Date	Presenter	Description
Thurs 10 th Feb	Gary Holpin https://www.facebook.com/GaryHolpinPhotography/	'A Photographic Journey Around the South West Coastal Footpath': Devon photographer Gary Holpin describes how a walk along the South West Coastal Path transformed his life. He is a semi-professional Landscape Photographer, passionate about Devon and the South West and specialises in vibrant coastal scenes. More details are on page 2.
Thurs 24 th Feb	Members Zoom meeting	Would any member like to volunteer to give a short presentation or talk at this Zoom meeting?
Thurs 10 th Mar	Professor Peter Edwards https://italianreflections.wordpress.com/	'Cataclysmic Italy': Sitting on the boundary between the African and Eurasian tectonic plates Italy has faced many geological disasters. A welcome return by Peter Edwards who entertained us last March with his illustrated talk on 'The Death of Venice' and then in April with his illustrated talk on 'Greek Temples in Italy'. Peter was a Professor in Engineering Mathematics and is passionate about Italy and visits whenever he can.
Thurs 24 th March	Members Zoom meeting	Would any member like to volunteer to give a short presentation or talk at this Zoom meeting?

Christine Chittock, Chair and Speakers' Coordinator – speakers@exmouthu3a.org.uk

*...and here's a photo from Christine Chittock –
'Just Looking'*



Zoom Coffee & Chat

These sessions are via Zoom and usually on 1st, 3rd and 5th Thursday mornings from 10:15 for 10:30 to 11:30.



Zoom Coffee & Chat sessions are open to all our members and are a good opportunity for a chat. You may have something you would like to share on a 'show and tell' basis, particularly any activities you have participated in as a group member. So why not make yourself a cup of coffee and tea and join us; you will be most welcome. The Zoom connection details are the same as shown at the top of the previous section on [page 5](#). (Photo by Christine Chittock)

Dates for February and March 2022:

3rd February and 17th February; 3rd March and 17th March

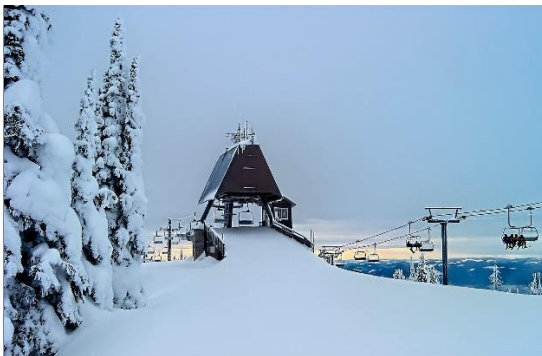
Although we send an email to all members the day before the monthly meetings and the monthly Zoom presentations reminding everyone about these events and giving the Zoom connection details to make connection easy, we do not routinely do this for everyone the day before these Zoom Coffee & Chat sessions. I have recently been sending reminders about these sessions to those of you who are on the Connect & Learn email circulation list, but if you are not on this list and **would like to be sent reminders about these Coffee & Chat session by email the day before, please let me know by emailing me direct** on the email address below and I will be happy to add you to the list.

John Hunt

Newsletter Editor

newsletter@exmouthu3a.org.uk

Winter in Canada – from Kristina Adamson

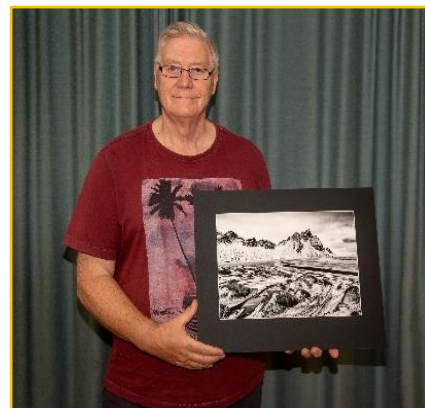


Review of 'Splendid Architecture' by Jenny Baker and Derrick Holliday -Thursday 13th January 2022 on Zoom

It was good to welcome new members to this Zoom presentation as well as many of our regular attendees. Jenny and Derrick had clearly put a lot of thought into their nine audio visuals (AVs) and we were treated to striking and well-chosen photographs, a great choice of music and sound effects and informative and interesting voice overs.

From the very start it was almost as if we were there, climbing 268 steep steps carved into the rock, anticipating what was to come and marvelling at the amazing Saint-Michel d'Aiguilhe (St. Michael of the Needle) in France. Not an easy climb or descent but Jenny and Derrick are determined photographers always keen to explore new places and secure definitive shots.

We saw effective titles in their AVs such as the word 'Reconciliation' placed over a photo of the cross of nails in Coventry Cathedral. Clever transitions from one photograph to the next helped us to see the stained glass windows designed by John Piper, with their magnificent colours so well crafted by Patrick Reyntiens in 1962.



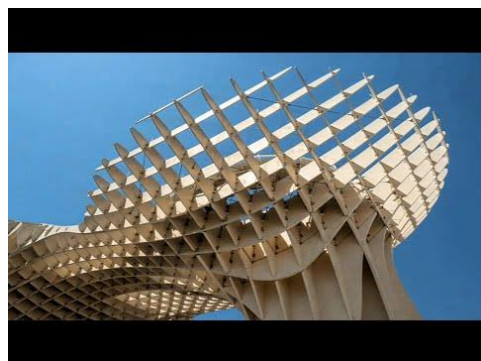
We were given just the right amount of information to capture and maintain our interest as in 'What an Amazing Place' about St Matthew's Glass Church in Jersey where we learnt about the link with Jesse Boot of Boots the Chemist. Lady Florence Trent, married to Jesse Boot commissioned Rene Lalique to design and make elaborate works in glass in memory of her husband. Amongst the many unusual items in glass was the stunning glass font believed to be the largest glass font in the world.

Whilst in Seville, Spain Jenny and Derrick visited the Metropol Parasol, popularly known as the Mushrooms of the Incarnation. Not easy to photograph but Jenny and Derrick did very well to capture it at its best showing off the wonderful wooden structure with two concrete columns that hold the access elevators to the viewpoint.

To finish we were treated to fantastic architecture closer to home in Salford Quays. Throughout Jenny and Derrick certainly showed us 'Splendid Architecture' and we marvelled at their ability to photograph large buildings from many different angles whilst also showing us intricate minute details.

Thank you Jenny and Derrick.

Review and photos by Christine Chittock, Chair and Speakers' Coordinator



Editor's note: Jenny and Derrick very kindly agreed to let us record their wonderful presentation, and it has now been posted on our Exmouth & District u3a YouTube channel for everyone to watch at any time. Well worth seeing (or seeing again). All the **Avs** they showed are there to see. Just click or tap on this link -

<https://youtu.be/bwzG4AddlsA>

Review of 'Crenels and Merlons' by John Vigar MA FSA Scot FRSA – Thursday 28th January 2022 on Zoom

We were delighted to have a return visit on Zoom by John Vigar from Norfolk who entertained us last January with his superb talk on John Betjeman. As expected, this was a fascinating talk, looking at the chronology of battlements and exploring a wide selection of buildings both famous and obscure to tell the story of this traditional and quirky feature.



He explained that battlements have been a feature of British architecture for over a thousand years, and that many of our iconic buildings feature them as an integral part of their design.



We learnt that the medieval use of battlements was firmly grounded in defence, with the crenels (the gaps, from the French for a notch) and the merlons (the uprights, from the Latin for blackbird) being originally employed to create safe places from which to fire on attackers. We also learnt about 'machicolations' which are crenels and merlons extended out from the top of the tower wall – they 'stand proud of the roof'. It was from these openings in the upper sections of castles or other fortifications through which missiles and boiling oil could

be thrown down onto attackers. 'Archery slits', originally for firing arrows, later had just a hole for guns to shoot through.

Later, battlements became a status symbol and were often used purely decoratively, and John showed us a huge range of buildings where these were used. We have listed many of the places that John took us to during his talk on the next page, and if anyone wants to know more, we have added links to relevant websites for each of these places.



One such place locally was Exeter Cathedral. He explained that intriguing way in which perspective on the west wall gives a false perspective with the impression that the wall is receding, as a sort of optical illusion (see photo on the left).

John included a lot of interesting bits of information. At one time you had to have a licence before you could add crenellations, Edinburgh Castle is squeezed between two existing buildings, and this bit of gruesome information: a father once imprisoned his daughter in a castle to preserve her virginity for a suitor she didn't want to marry. The

father subsequently beheaded her and he himself was then struck by lightning!

Thank you very much for another brilliant presentation John.

Review by John Hunt (Newsletter Editor) and Ian McLauchlin (Secretary)

Here are many of the places that John Vigar took us to during his presentation on Crenels and Merlons (with direct links to some related websites):

1. Tower of London – <https://www.hrp.org.uk/tower-of-london/>
2. Micklegate, York – https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/York_city_walls
3. Alnwick Castle, Northumberland – <https://www.alnwickcastle.com/>
4. Edinburgh Castle – <https://www.edinburghcastle.scot/>
5. People's Palace, Glasgow – <https://www.glasgowlife.org.uk/museums/venues/peoples-palace>
6. Rochester Castle – <https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/rochester-castle/>
7. Cooling Castle, Kent – https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cooling_Castle
8. Blarney Castle, near Cork, Ireland – <https://blarneycastle.ie/>
9. Compton Castle, Devon – <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/compton-castle>
10. Canterbury Cathedral, Kent – <https://www.canterbury-cathedral.org/>
11. Herstmonceux Castle, Sussex – <https://herstmonceux-castle.com/>
12. Tattershall Castle, Lincolnshire – <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/tattershall-castle>
13. Filby Church, Norfolk – <http://www.norfolkchurches.co.uk/filby/filby.htm>
14. Ranworth Church, Norfolk – <https://www.broadsideparishes.org.uk/churches/ranworth.htm>
15. St Gregory's Church, Norwich – https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St_Gregory%27s_Church,_Norwich
16. Sidbury Castle, Sidmouth – https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sidbury_Castle
17. Cliffe Castle, Bradford, Yorkshire – <https://www.visitbradford.com/thedms.aspx?dms=3&venue=2180332>
18. Exeter Cathedral with false perspective – <https://www.exeter-cathedral.org.uk/>
19. Shute Gatehouse, Axminster, Devon – <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/holidays/shute-barton-devon> and <https://www.landmarktrust.org.uk/search-and-book/properties/shute-gatehouse-12083/#Overview>
20. Staunton Harold Hall and Church, Leicestershire – <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1000493> and <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/staunton-harold-church>
21. Newark Castle, Nottinghamshire – <https://www.visit-nottinghamshire.co.uk/things-to-do/newark-castle-and-gardens-p354211>
22. Newark Park, near Wotton-under-Edge, Gloucestershire – <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/newark-park>
23. Kings Weston House, Bristol – https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kings_Weston_House
24. Pottergate, Alnwick, Northumberland – <https://historicengland.org.uk/services-skills/education/educational-images/pottergate-alnwick-9723>
25. Viewing Tower, Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire – <https://ross-on-line.co.uk/historic-ross-on-wye-landmark-for-sale/>
26. Fonthill Abbey, Wiltshire – https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fonthill_Abbey
27. Castle Howard, Yorkshire – <https://www.castlehoward.co.uk/>
28. Jetty, Brownsea Island, Poole, Dorset – <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/brownsea-island> and <http://www.pooleharbourguide.co.uk/brownsea-island.html>
29. Clytha Castle, Abergavenny, Monmouthshire – <https://www.landmarktrust.org.uk/search-and-book/properties/clytha-castle-6088/#Overview>
30. The Kymin, Monmouthshire – <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/the-kymin>
31. Wray Castle, Lake District, Cumbria – <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/wray-castle>
32. Gwrych Castle, North Wales – <https://www.gwrychcastle.co.uk/>
33. Conwy Castle, North Wales – <https://cadw.gov.wales/visit/places-to-visit/conwy-castle>
34. Clayton Tunnel, West Sussex – https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clayton_Tunnel
35. Bramhope Tunnel, Otely, West Yorkshire – <https://www.visittotley.co.uk/otleys-navvies-memorial/>
36. Cardiff Castle, South Wales – <https://www.cardiffcastle.com/>
37. Hampton Court Castle, Herefordshire – viewing tower – <https://www.hamptoncourtcastle.co.uk/visitors/visit-us/>



Left: Cooling Castle, Kent

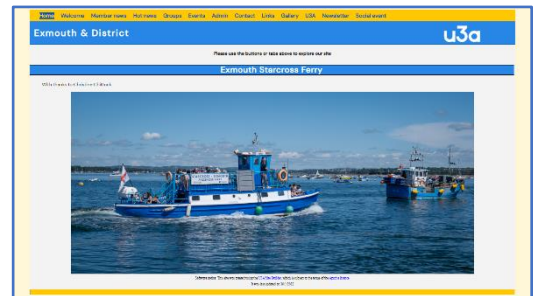
John Vigar's website is
<https://www.johnevigar.com/>

Exmouth & District u3a online – our digital world

With winter now upon us, when you are not actively involved in our u3a meetings there is always a lot to see and do online at any time that suits you – and from the comfort of your own home (or wherever else you happen to be in the world!). There are a number of ways we can connect with each other (as well as email):

- Our Exmouth & District u3a website: <https://u3asites.org.uk/exmouth/home>
- Our u3a YouTube channel: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCC_Wy5Vkb2C1itp1JhKtxAA
- Our u3a Facebook Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/exmouthU3A>
- Our u3a Connect & Learn website: <https://sites.google.com/view/connectandlearn> (and especially our Ideas and news page – at <https://sites.google.com/view/connectandlearn/ideas>).

Each month we will look at each of these in a bit more detail. This month it's the turn of our **Exmouth & District u3a's website** – <https://u3asites.org.uk/exmouth/home>. This is our very own website. It is here to serve all our members, and also to show everyone else what our organisation is and what activities we get up to. So it's a great way of showing non-members and potential members what we do. It is maintained by Marion Ricketts, one of our members, who for many years has been doing a brilliant job in looking after it and keeping it updated. You can see the current Home page on the right, and here are the main sections:



- Welcome: Lots of information about us – <https://u3asites.org.uk/exmouth/welcome>
- Member news: This webpage is for notices from members – <https://u3asites.org.uk/exmouth/page/54603>
- Hot news – <https://u3asites.org.uk/exmouth/page/31640>
- Groups: This is an important section listing all of our interest groups, with further information about each of them just a click or tap away – <https://u3asites.org.uk/exmouth/groups>
- Events: This gives details about our monthly meetings and the other events we organise – <https://u3asites.org.uk/exmouth/events>
- Admin: Tells you about the u3a committee and the work its members do – <https://u3asites.org.uk/exmouth/page/47654>
- Contact: A contact web form for anyone to make contact and ask any questions – <https://u3asites.org.uk/exmouth/contact>
- Links: Useful links (both internal and external) for further information – <https://u3asites.org.uk/exmouth/links>
- Gallery – for lots of pictures – <https://u3asites.org.uk/exmouth/gallery>
- u3a: the national u3a (Third Age Trust) – <https://www.u3a.org.uk/>
- Newsletter: current and previous editions of the public version of our monthly newsletter – <https://u3asites.org.uk/exmouth/page/85222>
- Social events – <https://u3asites.org.uk/exmouth/page/94035>

Our next edition



I hope you have enjoyed reading this newsletter, and thank you to our contributors this month. What other things would you like to see in future editions of the newsletter? If you have any views or comments about this newsletter, or if you wish to contribute any articles for the next newsletter in February, please contact me using the email address below. Photos, art, short articles and stories and poems from more members would be especially welcome. Photos of winter views would be particularly appreciated. The deadline for receipt of copy for next month's edition is **Wednesday 23rd February**. Thank you very much.

John Hunt

Newsletter Editor

newsletter@exmouthu3a.org.uk