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Monthly Meeting

in the Great Hall at Hexham Abbey

Tuesday 7th December at 2pm

Topic: 'Observations on Being a Child' given by Colin Argent



Over the past few hundred years the socially acceptable attitude to children has seen significant changes.

Throughout this period supposedly knowledgeable pundits have offered advice to parents and parents-to-be on how best to raise children, including their education.



This talk takes a wry, largely light hearted look at such advice from the absurd to the criminally irresponsible and identifies the historic need for good advice.

Note on Colin Argent, in his own words, 'that bloke masquerading as group fixer'.

**Just a reminder that if you miss the Monthly Meeting talk,
it is made available on YouTube and all members are emailed the link.**

We Are Fantastic!

Hexham Town Council wanted to learn more about Tynedale u3a and I attended their meeting in November to give a short presentation.

I think they were amazed at the range of interest groups that are thriving in Tynedale. Councillor Penny Grennan said we offered a truly democratic model of learning. 'Fantastic' were the words both she and the Town Mayor Derek Kennedy attributed to us.



Recently Ian Phillips came to talk about what the future looks like for the oil, gas and energy sector. This is the second talk we have had outside the regular monthly meeting addressing a more specialist area and it was well attended. Following his talk in November, Ian Jackson will be back in January to do a more specialist geological talk. Please see Page 3 of this Newsletter to find out more about his talk on 23rd January at the Hexham Golf Club and how you can book your place at this special event.

We hope to have more specialist speakers in the future, but it will be dependent on groups or members identifying people. If your interest group identifies someone they would like to hear and recognise that other members might too we can help to organise a talk. We already have two more potential speakers for next year.

We are looking for a replacement for Barrie Mellars who will be finishing his role as programme secretary at the AGM next year. If you are willing to take on a role on the committee, please contact Barrie or me as we would like to hear from you.

If you do not want to be on the committee and are willing to help in another way, we are also looking for someone to manage the camera at the monthly meetings. Barrie says it isn't difficult and doesn't require a lot of technical knowledge. Barrie would be on hand to assist if there was ever a problem. Please speak to Barrie if you think you could do this as it would be enormously helpful. I am receiving positive feedback from people who have not been able to make meetings and watched our speakers on film afterwards.

Can I also remind you that we are looking to adopt a new constitution at the AGM in March, a copy of which can be found on our website. I would be grateful if those of you who take an interest in constitutional matters would have a look at it and raise any concerns with me as soon as possible. I would like to get it right before we get to the AGM.

I would like to close by wishing all our members a happy festive period and a healthy 2024!

Wendy Dale



Events

A trip to Castle Howard was the final 2023 event; see the photos on page 8. Whilst not a massive take-up it was well organised and enjoyed by everyone.

For information, or to register for events please contact
Margaret Earl at - tu3aevents@yahoo.com or by telephone at 01434 689123

How to Make a Geological Map - of a bit of Northumberland, Britain...and the world

Following on from Ian Jackson's talk at the 7th November Monthly Meeting on **Northeast Rocks: The history of the Northeast in 20 stones**, he has kindly agreed to give a more specialist talk on Tuesday 23rd January 2024 at 7pm at Hexham Golf Club.

The bar will be open at the Golf Club serving teas, coffees, soft and alcoholic drinks (to be paid for). The talk will last for 40 minutes to an hour and will be followed by an opportunity for questions.

There is no charge to attend, however I need to keep an eye on numbers just to ensure we do not exceed the capacity of the room (100). It would be helpful therefore if you could let me know if you would like to attend at steve_rozario@hotmail.com or call him on 07748981847.

Background to the Topic

The challenge of a BGS field geologist in producing each of his 1:10,000 scale map sheets of 25 square kilometres of Britain is to use his expertise to interpret whatever evidence there is - outcrops, the shape of the topography, boreholes, river and road exposures, and in the absence of those, soil type and vegetation - and complete his map. The challenge of BGS, as the body responsible for Britain's geology since 1835, is to assemble those map sheets (many thousands), into a consistent national map and make them available to society; in the 21st century that means digitally.

The challenge of geology as a science is to recognise that the world and its peoples need the best and most coherent geological data possible to achieve sustainability for our environment and resource demands. Rocks and the opportunities and hazards they present do not respect or stop at political frontiers and so to the best of our ability our maps and science need to be joined up. This talk will describe those three challenges and how successful we have been in achieving them.

Speaker: Ian Jackson.

Ian was born and raised in Carlisle. He has a degree in geology and geography from the University of Newcastle upon Tyne and is a Chartered Geologist and Fellow of the Geological Society. He spent 18 years surveying the geology of parts of the north of England, including Northumberland and Tyneside, for the British Geological Survey. Later he was responsible for national and international programmes that produced the first UK, European and global digital geological maps and made them web accessible. He retired from the position of BGS Operations Director in 2011 and moved to Bardon Mill. Ian hikes in Northumberland, Durham or Cumbria every week and in addition to many scientific maps, articles and reports, he is the author of a recently published best-selling trilogy: Northumberland Rocks, Cumbria Rocks, and soon to be released, Durham Rocks.

Steve Rozario

Voices from the Past

I switched on the radio the other night to hear women talking about Doris Lessing's 1962 book, *The golden Notebook* <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m001scqg> and other tomes. In some ways this was a pre-feminist book that neither I nor any of my mates had heard of which is surprising as being very studious teenage lads we were keen to learn about women's bodies.



I discovered Doris in the 1970s with her life changing science fiction series, *Shikasta*. The author takes advantage of the SF genre to explore various social, spiritual and other ideas and I still rave about it 40 years on. I love the concept of people living until they're 500 years old with other milestones changed accordingly. This meant that humans didn't hit puberty until 70 and that's something I could really enjoy now. But back in the real world, it's interesting to reflect on the books and movies that changed our lives half a century ago and I'm going to dig out a couple.

Mike Foster

Meeting Venue Update

There is still nothing to report about the re-opening of the garden coffee house. Groups who met there have tried the Natural Grocer (upstairs) and Café Enna. The Heart of Northumberland has a space at the very back of the bar (afternoons only) and their upstairs room is now ready but is not really set up for our types of group.

Chrysalis do not run sessions for those with dementia on one day in the week and their rooms could be available (£12 / hour plus a £5 heating supplement in Winter). It is a pleasant space as you would expect for an organisation running therapy sessions for dementia sufferers. Incidentally they are always looking for volunteers and run occasional 'drop in for a chat sessions' for potential volunteers and clients alike. Check them out online but if you are interested in their room hire please contact Colin first.

Owen Mills at the Abbey has proposed reduced rate room hire if we can block book sessions with them for their quiet days in the week.

We have also been in discussion with the Hexham Community Centre who can offer preferential rates for block bookings. They also offer the potential for a small group meeting room for which we could have exclusive access.

I will be sending details out to convenors in the near future. If you have an interest in either of these please contact Colin first as the reduced rates may depend on our ability to put together a package of bookings.

Colin (Group Fixer)

Do you want to be lost in the translation of Latin Literature?

There is to be a short self-help course February to April (6 sessions) for any members who would like to brush up their skills in translating Latin texts and poems. It will run fortnightly on Mondays from 3pm until 4pm hopefully. **Please note this is not a group.**

The skill level is Post O level/GCSE Latin and beyond. Anyone with A level or University level Latin would be very welcome.

If you are interested, please phone Sue Loader on 01434 604787 or contact Colin who will pass your details on.

Hadrian's Wall Group

The group met in the County Hotel in November to discuss why the Romans occupied the North nearly thirty years after landing in Kent in 43AD.

Also, they considered why the Romans invaded what became Scotland three times and then withdrew?

The group explored why the North never became an integrated part of the Empire like the south and east of the country.

Mary Beard called it the Roman Afghanistan with the most heavily fortified border in the whole of the Empire.

The next meeting is also at the County Hotel at 2.00pm on **Thursday 18 January 2024.**

Please let me know if you are able to attend by -
emailing johnpatsandiford461@gmail.com or phoning 07541266928

John Sandiford



Group News

U3a Interest Groups On-Line

If we do not have an interest group that covers a subject you want to explore you may be able to join a u3a on-line group. Currently they operate almost 100 groups in a wide range of subjects. In order to join an on-line group you must enlist with them and pay an additional subscription fee. Some groups can accept new members but many are 'full' although it is possible to join a waiting list for each group.

To view the details of these groups go to the main u3a web site (u3a in your browser will find it) then click on 'learn' and then 'interest groups online'. Alternatively putting 'u3a interest groups online' should take you straight to the website page.

Here is an extract from the publicity material for the on-line groups:

"Interest Groups Online (abbreviated as IGO) is an online u3a community that gives you the opportunity to join groups, talks and courses from the comfort of your home.

Like with a u3a, the activities are run by members and are a great way to meet people from all across the u3a movement.

It costs £12 to join for the year, equating to £1 per month. Membership runs from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. Membership and your groups are managed via the u3a Beacon Members Portal.

To become a member of Interest Groups Online you will need to fill out a short form and make your payment on the u3a Beacon Members Portal. As part of your subscription to Interest Groups Online, you can opt in to receive a free copy of the u3a magazine, Third Age Matters.

Colin (Group Fixer)

Please note, this membership is for Interest Groups Online only, it does **not** include membership to local u3as.

Environment Group

The environment group would like to thank Richard Bentley for convening the group over the last 3 years and we welcome Liz Barne's who has taken on the role.

Wendy Dale

A Proposed New Group - the Gaelic Conversation Group

Maxine Tomney and a few others are interested in starting a gaelic conversation group. They have been learning online and are planning on getting together to practice speaking. None are fluent and are not proposing a class, but more to have the opportunity to meet together, chat and learn together. They hope that there are members who would be interested in joining the group .

They initially used Duolingo, but have moved on to the BBC 'Speak Gaelic'. It seems to be a good time to learn the language as there are many resources available now including BBC Alba and Radio Nan Gaidhlig. They have a few books from the Gaelic Council, and were pleased to see the recent announcement about a forthcoming Gaelic version of Scrabble from 'An Taigh Ceilidh' in Stornoway!

If you are interested in finding put more, please email Maxine at [<maxinetomney@msn.com>](mailto:maxinetomney@msn.com)

Group News

Creative Crafts Group Branches Out

Creative Crafts group members extended their range of skills and are now experienced willow weavers! Members of the group travelled to Wark village for a lesson on willow weaving; none had any previous experience. The concentration was intense, as they watched the tutor demonstrate how to start the framework of their future creation, using an upturned bread tray, and freshly cut, very smelly willow. Easy. Hmm, not in practice. After much head scratching, quite a few wasted strips, the willow started to take shape. By lunch time the creations looked a little like a kiln shape. With renewed energy the weaving restarted in earnest, and low and behold in a very short time the “kilns” had sprouted wings, and developed a recognisable form. By mid afternoon the group had produced a cluster of Christmas Angels. Each one unique. Some slender and elegant, some a bit rotund and looking as if they had eaten a few mince pies, and some might have been at the sherry and were a bit lopsided. But all will no doubt be on display during the festive period, admired by those who didn't see the perfect model produced by the tutor!

Margaret Wall



Group News

Landscape Group

In the November newsletter I mentioned that I had been contacted by Judy Milton of Medway u3a in Kent regarding the link between WH Auden and lead mining in the North Pennines. She had seen our Landscape programme and has been giving talks to her Geography group on Lead Mining. She and her daughter have written a book about Lead Mining and Auden, which has now been published and is available from Cogito in Hexham.

Her very interesting and informative email is given below -

Dear Steve and the Landscape Group,

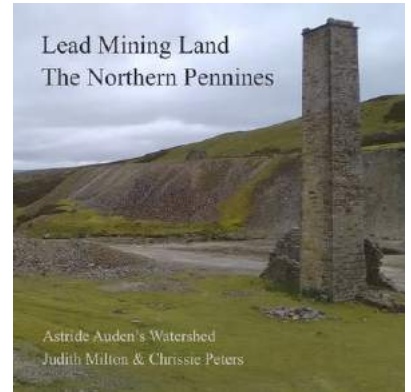
I have some news that I hope will interest you. I'm a member of the Geography Group of Medway u3a in Kent.

To my delight, the group members were interested in my contributions about the north Pennines, and my focus was lead mining, which I see is one of your winter topics.

When, some time ago, guests on an episode of Melvin Bragg's "In Our Time" discussed the poet W.H. Auden, I learnt that lead mining fascinated Auden too. However, in his poem "The Watershed" he stated that the lead mining lands of the Northern Pennines would not communicate. It set me thinking as I think they do tell a tale in many ways. The result is a forthcoming book that I have dedicated to the Medway Group although they don't know this yet! It's lead mining with an Auden twist as we (co-author, my daughter) comment on Auden's statement.

There are chapters on e.g. social history, industrial history, geology, settlement patterns and the future, and each chapter is introduced by fully copyrighted poems or extracts thereof. There are around 100 images, mainly as photos. (There's one of the Nent in the chapter that focuses on lead's environmental legacy.)

Steve Rozario



Great Tapestry of Scotland

Here are some photos of the Autumn outing to see the Great Tapestry of Scotland at Galashiels.

The brainchild of Alexander McCall Smith and designed by artist Andrew Crummy, the Great Tapestry of Scotland is one of the world's largest community arts projects.

Hand-stitched by a team of 1,000 stitchers from across Scotland over 300 miles of wool was used in creating the 160 linen panels (enough to lay the entire length of Scotland from the border with England to the tip of Shetland).

The design of the panels is based on a narrative written by Scottish Borders-based award-winning writer and historian Alistair Moffat.

Outing To Castle Howard

The final "Tu3a Event" of 2023 was a visit to Castle Howard to see their Peter Pan themed Christmas extravaganza. The weather was bleak and rainy as the coach picked us up at Corbridge, at a civilised 8.30am, and then headed off Southward. After a welcome coffee break at Durham services we arrived at Castle Howard shortly after 11am with brighter weather, and enough time for shopping and lunch before entry to the Christmas show. To quote a well known song, "It seemed a lot like Christmas" with gift shopping, turkey lunches, mince pies and baubles by the million. The vast house really was an extravaganza of creativity, imagination and someone's skilled planning. It was a wonderful imaginative show with Christmas trees all sizes, many different colours and all beautifully dressed. Special effects, helped by very smart electronics and illuminations, turned the whole house into a wonderland. As we moved from room to room we followed the Peter Pan story, showing the children's adventures and Tinkerbell, popping up here and there, using her magic. To round our day off nicely, when we boarded the coach for our journey home we were treated to mince pies and sherry.

Margaret Wall



Your committee

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Membership

536 Members
12 Associates



A VERY WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Raquel McFarlane	Patricia Johnson
Pat Holmes	Susan Blennerhassett
Guy Holmes	Jude Murray
Nick Walker	Doug Murray
Gislint Harvey	Catherine Grafton
Ann Groves	Mike Forster
Denise McMillen	Geoff Holdcroft
Denise Roberts	Bob de Oliveira
Anne Goldsmith	Rosalind Phillips
Hazel Page	Brenda Carrington
Roy Johnson	Frederick Scott
Lelia Tanti	Maxine Tomney
Lynn Clemiston	

Next issue of the newsletter

We very much welcome written contributions and photos from groups and individual members.

Please send your contributions to the newsletter editor, Tim O'Brien, at tyneu3anleditor@gmail.com

Thank you and I look forward to hearing from you.....

**DEADLINE for the NEXT NEWSLETTER
DECEMBER 14th**

Forthcoming Monthly Meetings Topics and Speakers

2 January 2024

The Reivers' given by Maks Loth

6 February 2024

Battle of Britain North East
given by Dennis Fox

We do hope you have enjoyed this edition of the Newsletter

Please join us on the **Tynedale u3a Facebook** page to keep up to date with information on events, interesting comments from members and engaging photos.

 Follow us on Facebook