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### MONTHLY MEETING

**2 May 2023 at 2pm**

in the Great Hall at Hexham Abbey

**The Speaker is David Hastings (Hon Sec RNLI Durham Branch)  
talking about "Wooden Boats And Iron Men"**

How Tragedy, Bravery and Generosity have shaped the RNLI to what it is today!



An inspirational history of lifesaving at sea and the Royal National Lifeboat Institution from 1790 to the present day and how volunteers have braved all weathers and shown immense courage to save over 143,000 lives.

The April Monthly Meeting was the best attended since COVID and all thoroughly enjoyed the talk by Dr Jo Bath.

The audience also much appreciated Chris Pollock stepping in at the last minute, as Jo Bath had been delayed by heavy traffic. His description of his science teachers and his early career was very entertaining and amusing.



## Edinburgh Royal Botanic Gardens

Tuesday, 1st August 2023

We are having a trip, by coach, to the world-famous Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh. There you can experience an extravaganza of plants from around the world, learn about the Garden's rich and diverse Living Collection and discover a history dating back to the 17th century.

The Garden, breathtaking at any time of year, is set in over 70 acres of beautiful landscape. It offers superb panoramic views of the city skyline featuring Edinburgh Castle. Garden highlights include the Rock Garden, the Alpine Houses, Woodland Garden, Pond, the Arboretum or tree collection, the Chinese Hillside, the Rhododendron Collection and the Scottish Native Plants Collection in the Heath Garden.



The site is disability friendly with wheelchairs and mobility scooters available and accessible toilets

There are a number of indoor and outdoor dining spaces to enjoy throughout the Garden; you can buy a meal, snacks and drinks or bring your own picnic.

The Botanics Shop has a wonderful array of botanically inspired gifts, books and sustainable products, as well as a fabulous selection of house plants and pots, with outdoor plants and garden accessories for sale in the Greenhouse.

The cost is £20 per person for the coach picking up at Chollerford and Hexham. Garden entry is free. An optional guided tour of the garden is available, £8 per person.

Book a place with Wendy Dale, [tyneu3achair1@btinternet.com](mailto:tyneu3achair1@btinternet.com) or at the next monthly meeting.

**u3a** learn, laugh, live

**NORTHUMBRIA REGION u3a QUIZ**

with a touch of magic

SUNNYSIDE SOCIAL CLUB, SUNNYSIDE, NE16 5NA  
Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> July 2023 2pm-5pm  
Teams of 4 (maximum 3 teams per u3a)

**FREE ENTRY**

Prizes  
Refreshments  
Good fun

Contact Wendy Dale ([tyneu3achair1@btinternet.com](mailto:tyneu3achair1@btinternet.com)) for further information.  
Entries close 11th July 2023

## A Grand Day Out

On Wednesday 5th April a group of inquisitive members of Tynedale U3A set out to visit Yorkshire Sculpture Park. We travelled to just south of Wakefield to the historic site of Bretton Hall, which is set in 500 acres of estate land. The hall has seen many changes in its three hundred years old history and at present is closed during renovation.

Meanwhile, the park is a wonderful place to exhibit contemporary sculptures by modern artists. I believe there are about five hundred pieces of work by fifty-eight artists situated throughout the park and all are situated on sites which show them outdoors to their best advantage. Individual pieces of work are purchased from time to time and are replaced by a new sculpture.

Shortly after we arrived we met our very knowledgeable and enthusiastic young guide who gave us a brief introduction to the works, before setting off on a tour that lasted about an hour and covered a tiny fraction of what was on offer. We saw such a variety of works in bronze by Barbara Hepworth, work in lettering by Robert Indiana in a composite material, and an amazing collection of animal heads in bronze again and situated at the top of tall decorated poles. This was by the Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who at present is in trouble with his government.

After exploring the park on our own, we returned to the bus for our comfortable journey home. This visit was a "taster" and on a future occasion we decided that to do this international centre for modern sculpture justice we should find a "b and b" nearby and spend a weekend exploring what this amazing place has to offer.

Many thanks to all who organised this most successful visit.  
Christine Blunt



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## QUIZ

On the evening of Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> March, several members met at Hexham Golf Club to take part in a splendid quiz organised by Barrie Mellars.

Teams of four exercised their grey matter through rounds about captains, geography, music, lateral thinking, food & drink, autobiographies, history and a picture round.

At half time, there was a delicious buffet and a chance to give our brains a rest. Not only was the quiz fun, but also educational; we will never forget that the cashew nut comes from a cashew apple (yes, really) or that Henry VIII allegedly introduced a tax on beards.

The eventual victors were team Lingo who were successful through some very obscure general knowledge (and some extremely lucky guesses!) and were rewarded with an Easter Egg each. Runners up also received prizes.

A good time was had by all and I look forward to the next one, if Barrie will let me take part!!!

*Sue Charlton*

## GROUP NEWS

### Wildlife Group

Our April meeting, delayed by the Easter holiday, was an interesting morning walk in the woods.

First an early start listening for birds then, after a stop for coffee and chat, looking out for some rather special spring flowers among the traditional woodland flora. We also took time to watch a roe deer, and look at insects and fungi we spotted along the way.



### Landscape Group

The Landscape group has completed its winter series of talks exploring three landscape themes : Railways, Kielder Forest, and Commons and Enclosures. A number of group members made interesting and varied contributions aligned to these themes. We also had two good presentations relating to 'What makes a Landscape', on Transport, and Agriculture and Abandoned villages.

Our summer program of outings starts in April, we have four outings planned. Each includes a pub/café lunch with a walk/talk afterwards. The programme is -

**Monday 24 April** – Lunch at the Milecastle Inn followed by a short scenic walk (about 3 miles) from Walltown to explore some of the Landscape Character Areas of the Tyne Gap (with links to Commons and Enclosures, and Railways).

**Monday 22 May** – A trip to the Kielder area, details to follow.

**Monday 26 June** – A trip to Hexhamshire, including a pub lunch, to visit some of the sites described in 'The making of the Hexhamshire Landscape' (a recommended read).

**Monday 24 July** – Bellingham Heritage Centre, including a talk and a short walk provided by volunteers at the Heritage centre on mining, ironworks, the railway and renewable energy.

If you are interested in joining please contact the convenor, Steve, at -

<https://u3asites.org.uk/tyndale/page/116214>

### Putting the World Right Group

In April we bounced around ideas about whether Greed was now good as Gordon Gekko advocated and how religious authorities sought and seek to control people in their own interests. The big vice of the early 21st century we decided was 'Entitlement' which we will be expanding on in a May meeting whilst the first May meeting will be on Heroes and Villains.

### Create and Craft Group

Our group enjoyed a workshop given by two Ukrainian ladies, making a traditional Horse given to men/boys in Ukraine as a good luck charm.

Our second workshop day was bobbin lace making where we all had a go at this old and very intricate craft, very kindly shown to us by Elizabeth Beardsley



## GROUP NEWS

### Beginners Italian



We are a small group which meets once a week for an hour and a half in a room provided by Newcastle Building Society in Hexham. We are led by Sarah and spend the time learning just enough grammar to enable us to string a few sentences together and have a basic understanding of Italian. It is an enjoyable, friendly and really relaxed way to practice and learn at a very gentle, unchallenging pace. If anyone is interested in starting or improving their Italian language skills, do come and join us. New members will soon be up to speed and you will feel much more confident when you next visit that beautiful country.

### Northern Rocks

A newly formed group of learners that want to explore the geology of the North East through field trips and discover more about what's beneath our feet.

Our first field trip to Walltown Quarry went very well last week with ten members (many of us new to Northumberland) braving the rain to learn a little about the geology of the local area together.

Walltown is a huge restored old quarry in the Whin Sill - one of northern England's most famous natural features. About 295 million years ago molten rock, or magma, rose up from deep within the earth and spread between layers of limestone, sandstone and shale which lies beneath much of the North Pennines. It cooled and solidified underground to form a huge sheet of igneous rock up to 90m thick.



The Whin Sill (whinstone to quarrymen and dolerite to geologists) is extremely hard and is perfect for roadstone chippings used in tarmac for motorways.

However, the quarry at Walltown closed in 1976 and has since been filled with compacted stony glacial clay and has become a popular country park and a haven for wildlife.

We all enjoyed walking around the site discussing the various rock features and especially pleased to find fossils at fossil crag. Most of us made it up to the very top of the crag where Hadrian's wall emerges and were rewarded with an impressive view of the entire quarry.

Afterwards we all reconvened at Twice Brewed Inn for some time to socialise and dry out!

### u3a National Amateur Radio Group



The U3A National Amateur Radio group now has a forum.

Amateur Radio, sometimes known as ham radio, is a worldwide communications hobby that allows individuals to learn about using transmitting equipment and make contact with other enthusiasts.

Are you an Amateur Radio enthusiast? Would you like to meet people with the same interest to share experiences and support each other in this area?

For more detailed information, assistance and support please use the [Contact Form](#)

## GROUP NEWS

### Environment Group

This month our group met to discuss farming. We looked at the latest book, "Regenesiis" by the controversial environmentalist George Monbiot. His theme is "How to feed the world without devouring the planet". Our second book was "Wild Fell" by Lee Schofield, ecologist and site manager for RSPB Haweswater. He is leading efforts to breathe life back into two hill farms and their 30 square kilometres of sprawling upland habitat.

These books are two contrasting approaches to farming and stimulated a lively discussion to which we will return.

Margaret Bentley



### Cycling

Some interest but not yet enough to launch a group. Get in touch if you are interested. I guess it is the lycra look – you love it or hate it!

### Group List

It has been suggested that an occasional listing of interest groups in the newsletter would be helpful .... So here it is!

Art Appreciation 1	Garden Visits	Science
Art Appreciation 2	Geology	Scrabble
Art Appreciation 3	German Language	Space Exploration
Bird Watching	Hadrian's Wall	Spanish
Blue Remembered Hills	History	Spanish for Improvers
Book Group 1	Italian Beginners	Tai Chi
Book Group 3	Italian Intermediate	Taijiquan
Book Group 4	Jazz Appreciation	Topical Discussion
Book Group-The Detectives	Landscape	Walking
Create And Craft	Latin Learners	Walking with Dogs
Creative Crafts	Latin Lovers	Watercolours
Cryptic Crosswords	Mah-Jong	Welsh Language (North)
Environmental Group	Music Appreciation	Welsh Language (South)
Family History	Northern Rocks	Wildlife
Family History 2	Out and About	Wine Appreciation
Fluent French Conversation	Play Reading	Wine Appreciation 2
French - Easy Going French	Poetry	
French Conversation (Group 2)	Put The World to Right	
French Intermediate		

### Convenors Lunch

A very pleasant lunch and opportunity to gossip. Thanks to everyone who came along and took the trouble to write notes about the issues posed in the questions left on the tables. These notes were extensive and a review will be posted in a future newsletter. GCHQ have kindly promised to help decipher some of the writing.

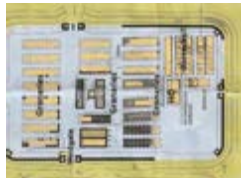
Photos From  The Groups  
Around



Create and Craft Group



Out and About Group  
visit to Laing Art Gallery to view  
Visions of Ancient Egypt



Hadrian Wall Group visit to  
Arbeia Roman Fort, South Shields



Northern Rocks Group



## Contributions from Our Members

### Exercising the Grey Cells

Putting the World Right facilitator Mike Foster strives to keep both of his grey cells working and his efforts have paid off as one of his questions was chosen for BBC Radio 4's fiendish *Round Britain Quiz*. So, letting his wife beat him at Scrabble has not been in vain.

### Synchronised Unicycle Display

Colin Argent (AKA Group Fixer) asks if any member has ever considered assisting with the promotion of our u3a by participating in a synchronized unicycle display? Apparently the effect can be mesmerising, especially if a number of the riders are proficient at playing the bagpipes while they pedal. Your replies are awaited with interest....

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## **ZOOM and Monthly Meetings**

The committee have been concerned for some time about the failings in the current arrangements to hold the monthly meetings as Hybrid meetings. Following the AGM we decided to review the current arrangements and consider the options that are available. We have agreed the following action:

- A temporary cessation of zoom coverage of monthly meetings while we review our future needs
- A working group session to discuss the options for the future

**In regard to the working group we would like to invite any of our members with experience of running on-line meetings to attend a working group to advise the committee on the following questions:**

- Do we continue with zoom?
- Are there better platforms we could use?
- What equipment specification do we need to meet?

For those of our members who follow our monthly meetings on zoom we apologise for the hiatus in coverage, we hope that some of you will be able to join us in person. In the meantime we will keep you informed of our future plans as they take shape.

If you can contribute to the working group, please email Colin Argent at [groupfixertyndale@btinternet.com](mailto:groupfixertyndale@btinternet.com)



## Events and Diary Dates for 2023



10 May	Wednesday	“Off the Wall” Hadrian Wall Festival of fun at the Sill.
26 May	Friday (at 10.00am)	Backstage at the Sage (a few places available)
22 July	Saturday	40 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations at the Mart.
26 July	Wednesday	Recycling plant visit (full)
1 August	Tuesday	Coach trip to Edinburgh Botanic Gardens (places available)
23 August	Wednesday	Recycling Plant visit (full)

There are a few members who are on a waiting list for a visit Backstage at the Sage, who can't make the 26<sup>th</sup> May and as soon as we get a few more we will find another date. If you are interested, please register at the monthly meeting or email Wendy Dale.



### 40<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebrations

Our Big Birthday Bash is now on Saturday July 22<sup>nd</sup> 2.00 pm at the Mart and we are hoping the occasion will be special and as many members as possible will come along.

Please help us make this year a memorable one.

We are subsidising the event, but we do ask members to pay £5 towards the cost. We believe the Afternoon Tea will be substantial, so we advise you not to have lunch.

Please let Wendy Dale know if you will be coming along at the monthly meeting or by email at - [tyneu3achair1@btinternet.com](mailto:tyneu3achair1@btinternet.com)

Payment for the Birthday celebrations can be made by BACS.

Pay to Tynedale u3a, account number 60601209 sort code 20-40-09. Please put your name in the reference box plus MART.

Cheques to be made payable to Tynedale u3a. These can be handed in at the monthly meeting or delivered to Wendy Dale at 21 Hencotes Hexham NE46 2EQ.

We really would like to hear from you with **any ideas** you have to celebrate our anniversary.

Last month Wendy asked if any member who enjoys cake decorating would be willing to make us a cake for a monthly meeting, but we have had no expressions of interest. We would be able to pay for the ingredients.



### Will You be the Tynedale u3a Baker?

**We knead a willing volunteer, not worried about the dough or the heat in the kitchen, to rise to the occasion and bake a Meeting Cake**



## Your committee

### Chair

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## Membership

We currently have **483** members,  
including eight associate members.

## A VERY WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Henry Griffiths	Margaret Pattison
Malcolm McKinnell	Patricia Haggie
Helen Gray	David Osborne
Peter Kirkham	Brenda Osborne
Karen Westgarth	Carol Fletcher
Jane Getliffe	Isobel Shackleton
Jane Clubley	



Also, a very warm welcome to our new Events Secretary,  
**Margaret Earl**, who has now joined the Committee

## Next issue of the newsletter

The next issue of the newsletter will be published in June 2023.

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

**Please send your contributions to the newsletter editor, Tim O'Brien, by 20 May.**

Email address: [tyneu3anleditor@gmail.com](mailto:tyneu3anleditor@gmail.com)

Thank you

