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## Monthly meeting, Tuesday 2 November 2021 at 2pm in the Great Hall, Hexham Abbey - and on Zoom

**Topic:** The Somme, 1st July 1916 - The Story of The Tyneside Scottish and Tyneside Irish

**Speaker:** Prof Iain Moffat RD DL (Captain RNR (Retd))

The Tyneside Scottish and Tyneside Irish Brigades, each some 4000 strong and all volunteers, were raised in 1914 for Kitchener's New Army. Following training in the UK, the two brigades were sent to France where they were committed at the opening of the Somme offensive of 1916, an offensive designed to take pressure off the French Army then being bled white at Verdun. Like so



Tyneside Irish Brigade advancing 1 July 1916

many other 'Pals Battalions' of the New Army, they were put to the severest test on the first day, 1<sup>st</sup> July. Their story deserves to be better remembered in the city and the colliery villages from whence they came.

*St Mark v, 9* (The reference to St Mark is intentional and is attributable to Lyn Macdonald and her book *The Somme*). To save you looking it up it reads :

*'And He asked him, 'What is thy name?' And he answered, saying 'My name is Legion; for we are many'.*

Iain Moffat is a longstanding member of Tynedale U3A. He has had a career in engineering and academia and also held a commission in the Royal Naval Reserve for some decades. His naval career was mainly spent with the Submarine Service. He retired with the rank of Captain. For some years, Iain was Vice Lord -Lieutenant of Northumberland.

## Message from the Chair

I am delighted to report that the coffee morning we held for new members was a vibrant occasion. We had about 30 people, including nine potential members who responded to our advert in the Hexham Courant. There was a great atmosphere with lots of talk and ideas being shared. I came away feeling energised. We are hoping to hold a similar event in November to coincide with a second advert in the Courant. We will include new members unable to make the October event and some members who are no longer in any of the groups.

I thoroughly enjoyed the October monthly meeting, 'A new home for mankind'. It was both entertaining and informative, had lots of humour and was good enough to be on television. The committee understand that there were some problems with the sound for those on Zoom and I want you to know that we are working on a solution. Please stick with us.

We are reaching out to attract new members and we would like your help. We have had leaflets prepared and would like to hear from you if you are involved with venues or groups that might be receptive. Initially we are targeting churches, faith groups and residential developments in Tynedale. Please let me know if you think you can help.

Our Desert Island Discs castaway this month is, like me, concerned about the environment. He believes it is important to reuse and recycle, and makes Christmas candles from recycled old candles. If you have old candles you would like to donate, please bring them to the monthly meetings, the General Havelock in Haydon Bridge, or John Harrison's home at East Cottage, Plunderheath, Haydon Bridge NE47 6JU (in bags please). If you would like to purchase them, please contact John at his home above or go to one of two Christmas Fairs: Haltwhistle Craft Fair on 6 November at 10am or Brampton Fair on 21 November. Eighty per cent of any profit goes to charity.

Wendy Dale

## Tynedale Desert Island Discs

My castaway on the first Desert Island Discs of the second series was John Harrison. The following were his eight choices of music:

1. The Cornish Floral Dance by the Brighthouse & Rastrick Brass Band
2. Myfanwy, sung by the Dowlais Male Voice Choir, with Nigel Owens
3. Dirty Old Town by Ewan MacColl, sung by the Spinners
4. The Water is Wide, sung by the Seekers at their special farewell performance
5. Meet on the Ledge, sung by Fairport Convention with Sandy Denny
6. Lara's Theme from Dr Zhivago by Maurice Jarre
7. Romance by Juan Martin
8. See What a Morning by Stuart Townend



## This month's Desert Island Discs



The Second programme of the series will be at 2 pm on Tuesday 16 November, when my castaway will be Jenny Harrington.

Mike Worthington

## Group liaison news

### Existing groups

It is good to see so many groups back in action after the long Covid-induced lay off. New members are coming forward and signing up for group activities such that a few groups are now once again full. If any members find they are unable to join an interest group for this reason, please get in touch and we will explore the possibility of starting a new group. For example, French continues to be particularly popular and I am getting requests from new u3a members about joining a French Group. I am particularly keen to hear from any frustrated French speakers to see if we need to start a fourth group.

Wine appreciation may not restart fully at this stage but the convenors are looking to recruit new members. Welsh language also needs some new blood.

Other groups looking for new members include German Conversation, Watercolour Painting, Detectives Book Group, Create and Craft Group, and the History Group.



### New groups

I have three people signed up for a gardening group and a wildlife group, so I am looking for a few more interested parties before organising a first get together.

We have five signed up for a new yoga group to be located in Hexham, but we need more members for the group to be viable in terms of cost.

Five people have signed up for the new landscape group, which will meet for a first exploratory session in the next week or two.

One member has suggested a DIY Home Maintenance group. The proposal has more to do with learning about the right tools and procedures than actual hands-on projects at this stage.



### New group suggestions

We are always keen to receive proposals for new groups so if you have a specific interest, do get in touch and we will float your group suggestion. I saw in the records when I took on the Group Liaison job that new groups had been suggested in the past ranging from dog walking to religious studies. If you have proposed a group in the past that failed to fly, I would be quite happy to give it another airing.

If any of these issues are of interest, just get in touch and we will explore what is possible. My email address is [groupfixertynedale@btinternet.com](mailto:groupfixertynedale@btinternet.com).

Colin Argent



## Group news and activities

### Book Group 1

Book Group 1 is keen to expand its membership. We are currently reading *Girl, Woman, Other* by Bernardine Evaristo, and next month we'll be diving into *Crow Lake* by Mary Lawson. Our year's reading concludes with Graham Greene's *The Heart of the Matter*. In December we choose the programme for 2022, so if you join now you can influence our future reading.

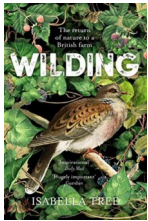


We meet at 10.30am on the last Wednesday of each month at Core Music, except when there are music exams and in December, when we move the date.

Kevin Stephens

### Book Group 4

During Covid we have been meeting via Zoom and each month has brought a new experience to group members. Variety is certainly the spice of life!



In August we enjoyed reading and discussing *Wilding* by Isabella Tree, the fascinating story of the Knepp experiment of rewilding on her family estate in West Sussex. In September we moved closer to home and back in time with *Magician of the North*, a biography of William Armstrong by Henrietta Heald. It was both nostalgic and informative for those of our group who are locals, and absolutely fascinating to incomers like me who have been encouraged to visit Cragside, Jesmond Dene and the Lit and Phil to learn more.

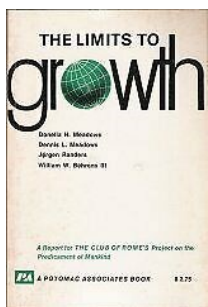
In October we moved further north, to Iceland, and read *Burial Rites*, a debut novel by Australian author Hannah Kent. She has written a speculative biography of Agnes Magnúsdóttir, condemned to death with fellow servant Fridrik Sigurdsson in the last executions in Iceland in the winter of 1830. As usual, we had a lively discussion with a range of interesting viewpoints.



Our group has men and women members and we would welcome a few more readers to join us.

Alan McKendrick

### Environment Group



Ahead of its 50th anniversary, we talked about the book *The Limits to Growth* (LTG), still the best-selling environmental book of all time and so, surely, the environmental book with more unread copies than any other. Environmentalists just assumed it must be great, without stopping to ask whether economic growth was really exponential, or whether the world can be modelled across 200 years by a methodology that requires fundamental structures to remain unchanged. Economists, on the other hand, reckoned it must be rubbish as the price mechanism had been relegated to 'bystander' status, later bolstered by the myth that LTG had predicted the exhaustion of various minerals.

More recently, several studies have attempted to show that we are following the LTG 'overshoot and collapse' paths, and are failing to hit their 'equilibrium society' paths because economists won the argument about the validity of their modelling.

This doesn't confirm the LTG model, but it is notable how many of their core assumptions have become mainstream: a finite planet; a global perspective; physical not monetary measurements; a crucial role for decision delays; and rising extraction costs as resources decline. *Limits to Growth* was never really about how much copper is in the ground, but might be about whether economics or science will be the dominant narrative as we dig, consume, and litter our way through the present century.

Matthew Naylor

## Your committee

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## Membership

We currently have 433 members, including nine associate members.



Tynedale u3a is a registered charity (number 515733).

# Welcome

A very warm welcome to Dorothy Ratki, Adrian Woolley, Julia Woolley, Sarah Bowen, Lindsey Cooper, Charles Watts, Helen Houghton and Josie Scott, who have recently joined our u3a.

## Dates for your diary

### Desert Island Discs Tuesday 16 November at 2pm

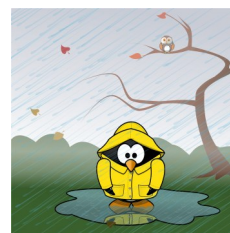
Our castaway will be Jenny Harrington.

### Monthly meetings - December 2021 to February 2022

7 December at 2pm: Colin Argent, Whatever happened to the electric corset?

4 January at 2pm: Chris Pollock, Why I'd rather wear GM cotton underpants than live next door to an organic dairy farm

1 February at 2pm: John Richards, Flora of Northumberland



## Next issue of the newsletter

The next issue of the newsletter will be published in December.

We welcome contributions from groups and individual members.

Please send your contributions to the newsletter editor, Alicia Cresswell, by 25 November. Email address: [tyneu3aeditor@gmail.com](mailto:tyneu3aeditor@gmail.com).