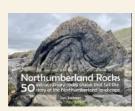




In this issue

Monthly Meeting For Your Diary Committee News Report Homeshare North East Members Memories in our 40th year Group Development Tynedale u3a Web Site Groups Hit Rate Group News New Members Warm Welcome Monthly Meetings Topics and Speakers





Monthly Meeting.

Tuesday 7th November at 2pm

in the Great Hall at Hexham Abbey



Topic: "Northeast Rocks: The History of the Northeast in 20 Stones" given by Ian Jackson

The Director of the British Museum, Neil MacGregor needed 100 objects to describe just 300,000 years of human history. Is it possible to describe 425 million years of the evolution of the landscape of northeast England in two books about 100 rocky places, or this talk about 20 stones in 40 short minutes? The talk will journey across the northeast and beneath it to explore the rocks that not only produced our region's stunning scenery, but are the foundation of its history, economy, wildlife and culture. Discover remnants of old volcanoes and deep oceans, walk across ancient coral reefs; visit mining villages that were once tropical swamps; or see the evidence for the awesome force of the last Ice Age. We hope the talk will inspire you to visit many of these places and perhaps to read the books which not only describe our spectacular landscape in a way that is accessible to ordinary people but use the latest research to explain why geology is relevant to our lives today: from the challenges presented by old mines, to climate change and future flood risk.

Biography. Ian Jackson 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.

For Your Diary....

Blenheim Palace Flower Show in 2024.

21 - 23 June 2024. (3 day visit with the Flower Show on the 22nd).

Cost £289, B & B plus dinner Single room supplement £70.

Hotel - 4 star, Courtyard Marriott Oxford South.

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

Committee News Report by Wendy Dale

Having reported last month that we had a new Assistant Treasurer I now must report a further change. Ally Forster having volunteered to fill the gap of Assistant Secretary found someone more suited to the role. We now have Kate Stephenson who is a chartered accountant and a very new member who has taken on the role. Ally will stay on the committee as a co-opted member without portfolio with a view to taking on the role of Publicity Officer at the AGM.

We are looking for a **Programme Secretary** to take up the position in March, so if you are interested in joining a dynamic and enthusiastic committee, please contact Barrie Mellars at <u>tyneu3aprogsec@yahoo.com</u>

Homeshare North East

Homeshare is a shared living model that has been used nationally and internationally for a long time. Homeshare matches people with spare rooms, who are looking for companionship and low level practical support, with people looking for affordable accommodation. It's a simple, mutually beneficial arrangement that connects people to share their lives.

Homeshare North East connect people who are seeking companionship and have a spare room in their home (Householders) with people who are looking for affordable accommodation and can offer time, companionship and practical support such as help with cooking, cleaning, gardening (Homesharers).

Homesharing is an innovative way of combatting isolation and loneliness whilst tackling the lack of affordable housing. This intergenerational living model is used internationally, offering choice to those with low level support needs, whilst also providing safe, affordable accommodation to younger people.

Homesharing enables older people to continue living independently at home for longer, with a sense of security and peace of mind, while supporting those struggling to find affordable accommodation at a time of record housing shortages and high living costs.

We know the model has a huge impact on health and wellbeing; reducing pressure on health and social care services, the housing sector, emergency services, GPs, statutory and health services and families.

Emily from Homeshare North East would like to tell us more about the model and if you are interested in learning more please let Wendy know by the 24th November at <u>tyneu3achair1@btinternet.com</u> or calling 01434 606215 and she will arrange a meeting.

Continuing the series of Members Memories in our 40th year

A handful of members recorded their memories earlier this year. Here are some direct spoken quotes from two members on the groups they have set up and contributed to.

Elizabeth Fish

Moved to Hexham in 1994 and continues to take part in groups.

"The ones I did belong to at various times were Italian, singing for pleasure – we used to be provided with the music and we used to do a sort of concert for the rest of the members if they wanted it at the end of the year.

Then I really wanted something for my birdwatching because I had belonged to a RSPB group back in Bedfordshire. The nearest one when I was living here was in Newcastle which was a nuisance for the talks but even more when you had to get that far before you could go on a field trip. So I talked to one or two people and then I put something ... we had a written newsletter then obviously, it wasn't all online and everything then. I put a note in saying if any body was interested in having a bird watching group and quite a few of us got together. I was convenor. Everybody wanted to meet on a different day, and I started off by trying to have a different day each month so that everybody could be helped, and it just didn't work. Of course, in those days it was all done by telephone, it was quite complicated to work out. Other people helped me.

The first one we did was to Duke House woods because I had walked up there and realised that there were some interesting birds up there. There were Crossbills for instance which you don't see that often and they were calling. So we started there. And we did the Hauxley area because there's quite a lot of stuff there. I was still driving them. We used to get up to about a dozen people. We settled on Monday in the end.

And when I gave up it was Margaret Bentley who took over. And because of the developments there have been it became more of an email thing, much more easy to organise. And it's still Monday."

John Sandiford

Joined in about 2008 and was an active committee member as Treasurer and contributing IT knowledge, though may be best known as convenor of Hadrian's Wall group.

" I remember having to wander around the place to find somebody who I could join with because it wasn't particularly obvious. I found one person, and they introduced me to the membership secretary and I joined. I was 64 at the time and ... most people at the meeting seemed to be older than what I was. ... I did start a walking group, walking group C, which was for over 10 mile walks which was very unsuccessful. The reason why I found it unsuccessful was ... I went on one walk with the Bluebells and just saw various people that I knew. I asked question – who is a member of the u3a? and everybody said yes bar one. So that was the reason why the walking group didn't work.

Coming to the end of 2013 I decided to start Hadrian's Wall group. It's now 10 years old ... We set up guides, first of all in the main website but it got too big for that so I set up my own website, and it developed to what it is today. We've had well over 50,000 visitors ... and more visitors now as my website techniques have improved. The only expertise that I had was that I was in Hexham hospital for 3 months ... about 2004, and I read everything there was to read about it. Then got on my feet and forgot all about it, but I've always been really interested in Hadrian's Wall right from a kid, and hence Hadrian's Wall group was born. ... I wasn't really ploughing on good soil. I think it may have now changed. ...Yes I got 10 but generally interest was pretty low. ... I talked this through with Wendy and she said 'they're not wonderfully keen on excursions'. I've now run more than 50 excursions, and it's ranged from 4 to 15 or 16. We've got guides to 70 of the Roman sites north of York which is just about the bulk of them".

GROUP DEVELOPMENT - An Explanation by Colin Argent

The interest groups are the heart and soul of our u3a. We currently have over 50 spanning a wide range of interests and our expressed aim is to ensure that group activities are available to all regardless of infirmity or disability. However, a number of issues do have an impact on group function.

We use the term 'convenor' for the person, or persons that administer the group activities. If a group is functioning efficiently everyone contributes to the planning and administration of the group activities so the 'convenor' is more akin to that of co-ordinator. There does seem to be a widespread reluctance to take on the role of convenor. One consequence of this is the failure of prospective new groups to get off the ground. You can interpret this as a plea for more convenors.

At least half of our groups are 'full'. What does 'full' mean. It can mean that a language / discussion group already has about 8 members the optimum for an inclusive discussion. It can mean the group meets in a venue that can only accommodate a fixed maximum of attendees and a move to a bigger venue is impractical e.g. due to increased cost or travel issues.

We now have over 500 members of Tynedale u3a and the membership is growing every month. Often this means we have a waiting list for membership of 'full' groups. Be aware that in such a situation it is reasonable for group convenors to remove members with a high rate of non-attendance to make space for new members from the waiting list.

Many of our groups, especially the smaller ones, cannot afford room hire and so meet at free venues such as members homes or local cafes. There is constant pressure, and competition for free venues so it would benefit all groups if we can share information about new/successful venues.

GROUP INFORMATION FROM THE TYNEDALE u3a WEBSITE

The following table shows the average monthly 'hit rate' for the period August 2022 to September 2023. If you had any doubts about the value of the web site this data should dispel them!

Art Appreciation 1	38	Latin Learners	28
Art Appreciation 2	26	Latin Lovers	24
Art Appreciation 3	19	Mah-Jong	21
Bird Watching	29	Music Appreciation	30
Blue Remembered Hills	50	Northern Rocks	27
Book Group 1	37	Out and About	36
Book Group 3	26	PlayReading	25
Book Group 4	33	Poetry	22
Create and Craft	28	Putting the World to Right	40
Creative Crafts	31	Science	35
Cryptic Crosswords	13	Scrabble	21
Dog Walking	26	Space Exploration	19
Easy Going French	30	Spanish	21
Environment Group	36	Spanish for Improvers	22
Family History	30	Tai Chi	65
Family History 2	20	Taijiquan	30
French Conversation (Group 2)	42	The Detectives Book Group	29
French For Fluent Speakers	19	The Page Tumers*	120*
French Intermediate	22	Topical Discussion Group	26
Garden Visits	36	Walking A	172
Geology	69	Walking with Dogs (T3)	11
German Language	27	Watercolour Painting	35
Hadrian's Wall Group	52	Welsh Beginners (S Wales)	8
History	41	Welsh Language	18
Italian	26	Wildlife Group	64
Italian beginners conversation	21	Wine Appreciation	24
Jazz Appreciation	25	Wine Appreciation 2	17
Landscape	44		

Note: * The average for The Page Turners group is for 3 months only.

GROUP NEWS

Geology Group Visit to the Yorkshire Dales

The second away trip of the summer was to look at the varied Geology of the Yorkshire Dales. In mid-September, an intrepid group of amateur geologists stayed for two nights at Malham. During the three-day trip we viewed sites formed up to 439million years ago in the Silurian Period and the more recent geology of the Carboniferous age (290 Mya to 363 Mya). We saw a wide range of rock formations, each with its own story and all contributing to the scenery of 'Gods own country'.

Brimham Rocks:

Not far from Ripon, an outcrop of Millstone Grits laid down in a braided river has been eroded into remarkable sculptural forms. With the help of Steve, a National Trust volunteer geologist, and despite atrocious weather, we learned about the river flows that had been diverted during earthquakes. These explained the smooth deposits and other heavily layered gritstone deposits, and why Brimham is so special.

Stump Cross Cavern:

We then went underground (just as the rain was easing!) to view subterranean Yorkshire where in 1860, miners searching for lead, broke through into natural caverns. Long before dinosaurs roamed the earth, the area around Stumps Cross was near the equator and covered by a shallow sea. Limestone formed from the fossil remains of the teeming plant and animal life in the warm seas.Over geological time, rainwater entered cracks and distortions in the limestone and have dissolved it to form kilometres of caverns which have numerous stalactites and stalagmites, with mineral deposits shown up by the ultraviolet torches provided.

While some of us, clad in hard helmets (the Headbangers) viewed the caverns in varying headroom, the wiser members sat in the warm café drinking coffee.

LIMESTONE COUNTRY

Malham Tarn and Malham Cove Limestone Pavement

Above Malham Cove, the Tarn mainly lies on a Silurian slate bed, covered in marl deposits preventing it draining into the nearby permeable limestone. The outflow stream soon disappears into limestone beds at Water Sinks and emerges some miles away at the source of the river Aire. Oddly the water emerging from the foot of Malham cove is not related (as demonstrated using dyes and radioactive traces).

At the top of the cliffs there are extensive areas of Great Scar limestone

pavement formed when sea levels rose, and northern England was flooded by warm tropical seas. (Hard to believe – but we were then 10° south of the equator). Eroding ice scoured the plateau and rain has slowly dissolved the cracks to form the spectacular clints (blocks) and grikes (fissures) that we see today.

Malham Cove

We were able to walk from our hotel to the impressive Malham Cove. This was formed originally by the Middle Craven Fault and has retreated to its present location due to glaciation and erosion. The central part of the 'cliffs' shows evidence of massive waterfalls from four ice ages over the past sixty thousand years but is now a magnet for rock climbers.

Continued over the page....







Geology Group Visit to the Yorkshire Dales continued..

Janets Foss and Gordale Scar

Janets Foss carries the Gordale Beck over a limestone outcrop topped by tufa into a deep pool below (originally used for sheep dipping). Foss is a Nordic word for waterfall, and it is named after Janet who was Queen of the Fairies here!

Further upstream, the Beck has carved Gordale Scar, a limestone ravine with two waterfalls and 100m high limestone cliffs. It is thought that glacial meltwater has carved through the rock on the same Middle Craven Fault where we saw evidence of rock fractures near the fault.

We went back in time to the Ordovician period -

Thornton Force

Walking down through limestone strata we descended to Thornton Force. Three layers of rock are displayed in one of the most famous geological locations in Britain. The basement Ordovician slates were laid down as muds and sands in a deep ocean and compressed into rocks. These were folded into near vertical layers and then planed off. Then a thin layer of conglomerate - a mixture of rock fragments encased in a limestone matrix, and finally a thick bed of the Great Scar Limestone. The unconformity (or gap) between the limestone and the slates represents 80 million years!



The course of the river changed as a result of the last ice age, when terminal moraines from glaciers formed a barrier at the southern end of Kingsdale. Eventually a lake over-topped the Raven Ray barrier cutting a new route through the moraine and underlying Great Scar limestone forming the waterfall that we see today.

DryRigg and Old Combs Quarries

Two quarries enabled us to peer 480 million years into the past when turbidity flows (submarine landslides) in the lapetus Ocean laid down a sequence of mudstones, siltstones and fine grain sandstones. Under immense pressure, and as a result of tectonic plate convergence, the strata were folded and crumpled forming anticlines of metamorphosed greywackes and poor-quality slates.

The larger, working quarry produces crushed stone for roadstone. It has a convenient viewing platform for the public. Nearby, we were able to drive up to a now disused quarry and see a famous major 'unconformity' marking the gap in time between the erosion of the folded Silurian Greywackes and siltstones, gritstones and the subsequent laying of the Great Scar Limestone on top. The missing layers represent about 70 million years.

Hardraw Force

This has a drop of over 30m and is the longest free fall in Great Britain. Behind it is the complete Yoredale Cyclothem (345-320Mya). Alternating layers of limestone, shale and sandstone along with thin coal and earth seams were laid down and repeated about 8 times. The fluctuations of warm seas, river deltas and changing water depth resulted in the cyclothems which are reflected in the hill scenery of the area around Hawes.

Buttertubs

One last treat on the way home was a visit to Buttertubs where a 24 m limestone pothole is positioned conveniently beside the road. The name is said to come from the times when farmers would rest on their way to market. During hot weather they would cool the butter they had produced in the potholes.

We are grateful to David who proposed our route and gave us an in depth illustrated briefing before we set off. Thanks to Sue for making the arrangements and who through detailed Health and Safety checks and revised plans delivered us in one piece at the end of our travels.

John Loader

Hadrian's Wall Group

The group braved the very wet and windy weather to visit Papacastle Roman Fort, the Maryport Roman Fort/ Alvana and the Senhouse Museum

Papcastle Roman Fort (called Derventio), which was originally built in timber and rebuilt in stone. There was also a civilian settlement, the vicus.



Maryport Roman Fort/Alavna and Senhouse Museum





The next meeting of the group will be Thursday 16th November at The County Hotel in the Snug at 2.00 pm The weather is no longer suitable for outside visits, so we are meeting inside to discuss why the Romans occupied the North nearly 30 years after landing in Kent in 43AD. Also, why did they invade what became Scotland three times and then withdraw? We will also discuss 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.

All this for the price of a cup of coffee, let me know if you can come. John Sandiford Convenor Tel:07541266928

Environment Group

We were very pleased to welcome Ian Diggory to our latest meeting. Ian has been a consultant to the gas and oil industries for more than forty years and has a particular interest in the integrity and risk to pipeline infrastructure. Pipelines are themselves under threat from global warming because of the associated and increasingly frequent extreme weather events that can cause erosion, subsidence and melting of permafrost, which may in turn cause pipes to bend and leak.

He presented a clear and detailed account of the problems involved in making the transition from carbon based energy to non-carbon energy. Wind turbines and solar panels can supply most of our electricity in the UK but only intermittently and on a good windy day, and we have very little battery storage capacity to even out the supply and demand. As things stand carbon capture, nuclear fusion, replacing natural gas with hydrogen, and solar panel arrays in space are still at the experimental stage, and a great deal of time and energy will be needed if they are to be developed and built. Pipelines may have to be modified if they are to transport captured CO2 or hydrogen.

All these technologies will help the transition but a major expansion of electricity grids around the world is urgently needed if electricity is to replace the energy we currently generate by burning fossil fuels. Perhaps we should pay more attention to reducing energy consumption which is currently predicted to rise.

R J Bentley

Northern Rocks Group

Cuddy's Crags and north of the wall The U3A Northern Rocks group had super walk and talk up on and around Hadrian's wall at our meeting in September. It was amazing to see the Whin Sill up close and from all angles. We learned how rock layers of the Carboniferous period were formed and looked for evidence of the different layers as we walked north of the wall. Incredible to see the classic scarp and dip landscape on both sides of the wall and as we grew weary, going up and down the numerous steep gaps along the wall, we discussed the influence of glacial erosion and water melt that helped create the undulating shape of the whin sill. Many thanks to Kate for researching and leading this outing to our most famous 'Northern Rock'.



Cullernose Point and Howick Bay In October the Northern Rocks group headed to the coast to see where the whin sill meets the sea. The hard dolerite rock forms an impressive rugged cliff that tapers into a point out to sea, displaying its distinctive vertical fractures, typical of many igneous rocks. In the bay to the south of Cullernose Point, limestones and sandstones can be seen gently folded in places. Visibly we could also see the beach slashed by a separate narrow ridge of whin sill dolerite, from the cliff into the sea. Further south we also came across the Howick Fault where the rocks to the south have dropped more than 200m compared to the rocks north of the fault. We all enjoyed exploring Howick Bay at low tide, spotting fossils of shells and crinoids in the limestone. Many thanks to Sallie for her enthusiasm and knowledge of the area, leading us on this fascinating walk and talk. Huge thanks must also go to local geologist, Ian Jackson - author of 50 Northumberland Rocks - for inspiring the group to visit so many 'Northern Rocks' this year.

Kate Clouston







Wildlife Group FUNGI FORAGE

A woodland is a secret, magical place to wander through at any time of the year but especially so in Autumn when you will see a marvellous array of wild fungi of every size, colour and texture.

On a mild day in October many members of the Wildlife group met at Slaley Wood to do just that. We were guided and informed by Sally, an amateur fungi enthusiast from Blyth, and what a lot of fungi we saw. They were everywhere, popping up through the undergrowth or hidden away at the bottom of tree trunks and we even found small ones growing on the branches of the trees around us. Unlike flowers it is ok to pick mushrooms and we delighted in spotting them and bringing them to Sally for identification.

We found Shaggy Inkcap, also known as Lawyers Wig because of their shape, Puffballs which were rounded and when touched released their spores like a spray of dust, Slippery Jack which is very slimy when wet and the famous Stinkhorn which is very pungent and a little indecent in appearance so Victorian gentlemen knocked them to the ground in order that Victorian ladies wouldn't see or smell them!

Many fungi have distinctive smells and we smelt coconut, cabbage, disinfectant and even one that smelt perfumed, almost like pot pourri on the specimens we found. Perhaps the most magical of all the fungi we came across is the Fly Agaric with its bright red cap, white spots and white gills and they can grow up to 20 cm across and 30 cm tall. This mushroom has a savoury smell and is known for being the home of fairies and magical creatures. But be warned as enchanting as it looks it is highly toxic and if eaten can cause hallucinations. Needless to say we had no intention of cooking it or any of the other fungi we found. Everyone agreed it had been a wonderful afternoon in the woods and our knowledge of fungi truly extended.

All we took home were very muddy boots or wellies!

Joan Sykes





Spanish Conversation Group ¿Te gusta conversar en español?

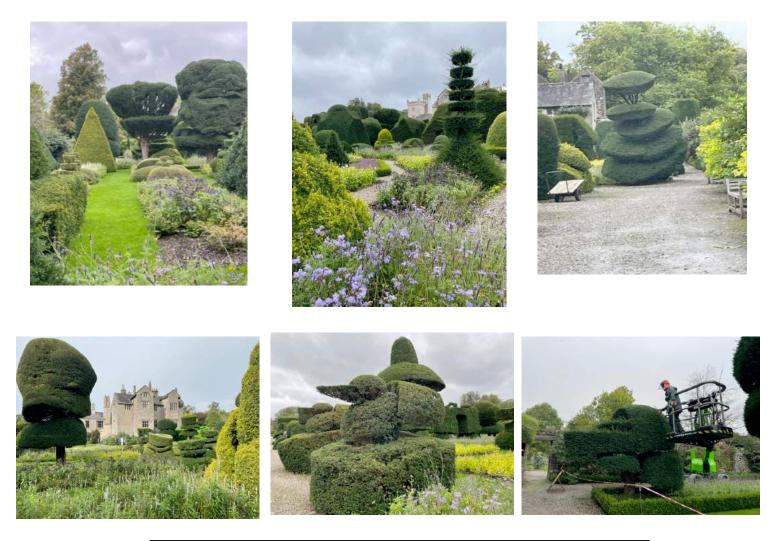
The Spanish Conversation group has space for a couple of new members. If you fancy chatting in Spanish, why not join us? We're not experts, but have a level which allows us to read and discuss a wide variety of topics, whilst not taking ourselves too seriously!



Want to know more? Contact convenor Sue (details on the u3a website).

Garden Vists Group at Levens Hall

Located at the gateway to the Lake District National Park, five miles south of Kendal in Cumbria, Levens Hall is home to the world's oldest topiary gardens.



Landscape Group

At the October meeting there were presentations on -

Field Boundaries

An introduction to the topic of field boundaries in the Landscape, by Steve Rosario

The National Library of Scotland has scanned images of maps for the whole of the UK, including historical OS maps and a side-by-side viewer, it is superb for exploring changes in field boundaries between different editions of OS maps.

Lead Mining

An introduction to the topic of Lead mining in the North Pennines, by Wendy Dale

Interestingly the group has been contacted by Judy MIlton of Medway u3a in Kent who has produced a book 'Lead Mining Land The Northern Pennines', (Sub-title Astride Auden's Watershed). This looks at the connection between WH Auden and the lead mining landscape of the North Pennines; a subject that the Landscape Group is exploring...watch this space!

Steve Rosario

Your committee

Chair Wendy Dale - 606215 tyneu3achair1@btinternet.com

Business Secretary Ann Atkinson - 07813 487064 tyneu3absec@gmail.com

Treasurer Susan Turnbull - 607264 <u>tu3atr@gmail.com</u>

Assistant Treasurer Kate Stephenson tu3atra2@gmail.com

Membership Secretary John Dark - 602584 tyneu3amemsec1@gmail.com

Programme Secretary Barrie Mellars - 07831255520 tyneu3aprogsec@yahoo.com

Groups Liaison Secretary Colin Argent - 07498798020 groupfixertynedale@btinternet.com

Publicity Officer Sally Hewitt - 07500136870 tyneu3apublicity@gmail.com

Beacon Administrator & Website Manager Lesley Parsons - 07588178570 tyneu3abeacon@gmail.com

Events Secretary Margaret Earl tu3aevents@yahoo.com

Committee Member Ally Forster <u>tu3atras@gmail.com</u>

Newsletter Editor Tim O'Brien - 07540404430 tyneu3anleditor@gmail.com

Membership

517 Members

9 Associates





A VERY WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Heather Adams Deryn Walker Melanie Butler Warwick Irwin Elaine Pearson Diane Whitehouse Karen Melvin Kate Steven Celia Atherton David Taylor Kathleen Tickell Catherine Pye Ruth Barnfield

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 <u>tyneu3anleditor@gmail.com</u>

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

DEADLINE for NEXT NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 23rd

Forthcoming Monthly Meetings Topics and Speakers

5 December 2023 'Observations on Being a Child' given by Colin Argent

2 January 2024 'The Reivers' given by Maks Loth

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