



Newsletter November 2023

Contact us; u3a 07561 626690 Website www.berwickupontweedu3a.org.uk

Welcome to your November Newsletter

News From the Committee

OPEN MEETING MONDAY 6 NOVEMBER ST AIDAN'S HALL 10 FOR 10.30

Our speaker is Denis Harry Fox, a distinguished military and landscape artist who has produced a series of paintings on a little-known air battle over the Northumbrian coast that took place on 15 August 1940 between the Luftwaffe and 8 RAF squadrons. Denis will show and talk about his work, as well as telling some interesting anecdotes about the airmen involved.

Andy's Man Club

Our October speaker was John Ritchie from Andy's Man Club. He explained how the club came about in Halifax after the suicide of Andy Roberts in 2016 and is now thriving in the form of 144 groups across England, Scotland and Wales. Meetings take place on a Monday evening, since most suicidal thoughts occur after a weekend. The guiding principle is that 'it is ok to talk' and to share problems with other men in a welcoming, non-judgemental environment. The charity is supported by celebrities, politicians, royalty and sportspeople. We were very impressed by John's candid and inspiring presentation and wished him the best in his important role as one of the facilitators of the Berwick group.

Group Vacancies

Now that the u3a year is in full swing, here is a list of groups which have some space for new members. It is NOT a definitive list! If you fancy joining a group, please either contact the leader via the website or me.

Art 2

Scrabble

Needles and Hooks

Backgammon

Cribbage

Zentangle

Natural Non Fiction

Chess

Table Tennis

Silver Short Striders

Exploring History and Places

Some groups are full, so if anyone is tempted to lead a group , please get in touch.

Helen Atkinson

Group Leader Co-ordinator

News From the Groups

Berwick upon Tweed u3a WhatsApp Friendship Group

Did you know there is a new WhatsApp Friendship Group?

Would you like to go out sometimes without your 'other half' or maybe your friends are too busy. Like to meet new friends and go for a walk, a meal out, a cinema/theatre visit, a cream tea or whatever? If you fancy doing something, but not alone, then pick a date and put all the info on the Friendship WhatsApp Group and see who wants to join you.

To sign up contact us on 07561 626690

Art 1 And Art 2.

There are 5 Wednesdays in November and it is the end of using pastels.

Art 1 Nov 1 still life bring in and table share

Art 2 Nov 8 charcoal to draw bare trees or building site or a pier

Art I Nov 15 charcoal to draw bare trees or building site or a pier

Art 2 Nov 22 own choice or catch up this is your last planned pastel session

Art 1 Nov 29 own choice or catch up this is your last planned pastel session

Sue Handoll

Scrabble

Just one seven letter word on a triple word score and the word was - "Noticed!"

It always appears that lots of seven letter words crop up but there is no opening for them

Two full tables last time, anyone who has time on their hands can come to King James's court, West street on the third Monday of the month 2-4PM

Next games are on Monday the 20th.

Sue Handoll

Needles and Hooks.

We meet on Friday 24th 10AM-12 Noon. Autumn is always a busy time for all those who use needles and hooks preparing for Christmas and making unusual presents for family members.

Please start thinking about what you would like to show in the photograph for the website in December. **Sue Handoll**

Family History

We have only had a couple of sessions so far. Those who have managed to attend are keen to get on and find out more about their forebears. It's often far from simple as there are so many records available and in many different places! Key issues are knowing where and how to search as well as finding clues that will point us in the right direction. **Lynne Ellerby**

Dining Group 3

This month four of us braved storm Babet to dine at the Cross Inn, Paxton. Despite reduced numbers we had a most enjoyable evening with some good food and conversation. **Lynne Ellerby**

U3A Geology Group

The new arrangement of having two sessions on the first Wednesday in the month in the Lounge in King James Court, West Street, Berwick seemed to go very well so thanks to King James Court management for making that possible and to group members for being flexible. The first session is at 9.30 – 11.30 and the second at 12.00 – 2.00, so please bring your questions and appropriate refreshments.

The talk on Iceland last month was an introduction to plate tectonics and volcanoes and we'll continue with the theme in November, but in a more exotic location this time. Cyprus is a classic area where geologists can see oceanic lavas above the surface, as well as copper and gold mines, unusual fossils and archaeological remains.

Wednesday 1st November

Cyprus – plate tectonics, minerals and rocks

Wednesday 6th December

Isle of Man – rocks, volcanoes and plate tectonics

Alison Tymon

Quiz Group

Having answered several rounds of questions on General Knowledge, World Landmarks, Authors of Childrens books, The Colour Blue, Hallowe'en, and Fish beginning with 'S', the winning team were 'In for a penny' with a score of 103 points.

Next month's quiz will take place on 21st November at 2pm. **Hazel Allan**

Busy Bees Crafts

Our Project for 10th November is to stitch Christmas cards in 4 different designs – Robins, Bells, a Wreath, and an Angel. Please bring your sewing kit, small scissors, a sharp needle and normal or metallic embroidery thread in Red, Green, Silver, and Gold or any other colours you wish to use. I will supply patterns, cards, envelopes, spare thread, and tiny beads in red and black.

Please bring your own work if you are not participating in the activity. **Hazel Allan**

Dining Group 1

Now the clocks have gone back, we will be staying in the Berwick area for the next few months. We hope to visit Amrans and Limoncello in November. **Hazel Allen**

Tai Chi

Our Autumn indoor sessions continue, and we still have spaces in our beginner session. Our Tai Chi aims is to improve health & balance using gentle exercises and have fun while doing so. Interested? Why not find out more on the link below or try a taster session with no obligation to continue if it's not for you?

The beginner's session is on Tuesday morning from 09:30 - 10:30

Or for the less steady, we have a Seated session on Thursday at 1 pm.

All sessions take place in St. Aidan's Hall, Church Road, Berwick TD15 1DX

For more information and contacts, go to the Berwick U3A website and look up Tai Chi:- <https://u3asites.org.uk/berwick/groups>

Book Group 3

5 of us heroically met in the library on a very blustery day.

We discussed the book for October - *'My Name is Red'* by Orhan Pamuk.

The author won The Nobel Prize for Literature 2006 and the translator won an award for this book.

June led the discussion and we agreed that we were all grateful to June and Trudy for their helpful links and attachments.

Most of us found the book to be a bit long, with multiple characters, plots and stories within stories.

Nevertheless, the diverse themes [murder-mystery, romance, painting, culture, political conflict] were interesting and we marvelled at the detail in a Persian miniaturist painting.

However, in the end we were nearly universal in awarding a score of 5.

Our next book is '*The Postmistress*' by Sarah Blake.

Lesley Angell [for Group Leader Tessa Sowerby]

Art Appreciation Group

18 of us met up on a blustery and dreich Thursday for our first Art Appreciation meeting of the season.

We showed '**Freedom!**' a slideshow we compiled on-line in 'Lockdown' [June 2020] just before restrictions were lifted [only sadly to be imposed again later in the year]. Each member chose an image, described what they liked and why, then emailed the image and text to me to compile.

On Thursday, we discussed the various images [paintings and photographs] with interesting views expressed. It's good to wonder why an image might appeal or, alternatively, be disturbing or unattractive and also wonder if and how that matters. Especially relevant to now, 'Freedom' is still not possible for many people around the world and I'm sure we all silently counted our blessings.

Next month we look forward to '**The Art of Coventry Cathedral**'. **Lesley Angell**

Crime Book Group

The Crime Book Group will be moving to the library from 21st of November.

Hopefully this will be our permanent home as it is fairly friendly to most physical disabilities. My only concern is that we will get sent out for making too much noise! if anyone would like to join us moving to a new venue means we have room for one or two new members. Contact me through our u3a phone number. **Janice Bowden**

Discussion group

For a change, we listened to a podcast for 10 minutes, which is presented by two PR professionals. The subject was Taylor Swift, who has a digital online following (twitter / Instagram) of half a BILLION fans. In 2018, she made an off-the-cuff remark about a politician who was against equal pay for women and she committed that the politician would not be getting her vote. She also suggested that young people should register to vote and as a result, young voter registration went up by 1100% and the politician in question saw her vote reduced by 30%.

Because the world is becoming increasingly digitised, I am beginning to wonder if in the not too distant future the ballot box will become redundant.

Welcome to the Brave New World?

Ian Cordingly

Ride & Stride

Our October walk was delayed by 3 days due to Storm Babet. In the event, the river Till was still flooding above the level of the footpath in places, so our route was diverted onto higher ground via Tiptoe Farm. However, we did have a lunch break at "The Hut" by the river's edge as planned. On arrival in Etal we were greeted by spooky witches and other costumed figures - all in preparation for Halloween.

Our next walk is on Friday 24th November: 7 miles through Detchant Woods to Lowick. Bus 10.05 from Berwick Rail Station, or 10.11 Golden Square, route X18 to Detchant Lodge. Return from Lowick at 14.36, route 464.

Derrick Joanes

Natural non-fiction Book Group

Here is a list of the books we have read since last Spring. Some were better than others.

Andrew Greig – *At the loch of the green corrie*

Rebecca Stott - *Darwin and the Barnacle*

Lewis Stempel - *The running hare*

Sarah Gibson - *Swifts and us*

Katherine Rundell - *The golden mole*

Adam Nicholson - *Between the tides*

Nick Hayes - *The book of trespass*

Nan Shepherd - *The Living mountain*

Stephen Block

Silver Short Striders

The group have done a couple of walks. The first one in September was a circular walk starting at the Chain Bridge Honey Farm. We walked past the Union Chain Bridge and along the River Tweed before returning to the Honey Farm. In October we walked from Middleton to Belford. We had a very big surprise on this walk. As we approached Belford, we came across dozens and dozens of butterflies. Our next walk will local in Berwick. **Martin Rowell**

Exploring History and Places

After a summer break the group have done a couple of outside visits. In September we went to the Yetholm Heritage Centre in Town Yetholm, and to the church in Kirk Yetholm. Our October visit was to the Union Chain Bridge, which reopened this summer after being closed for major repairs. From November we shall be meeting indoors. **Martin Rowell**

Archaeology Group

Our next meeting will be on Thursday 16th November at St Aiden's.

Jim Crow

Play reading Group

Last month we concluded reading Dandy Dick by Arthur Pinero, which we enjoyed. We began reading Heartbreak House by GB Shaw. Members were unsure if this was enjoyable, so if anyone would prefer to change, please get in touch!

Next Meeting is Monday 13th November at 4.30pm. **Judy Crow**

Backgammon

The new year has started well for the Backgammon group with returners and enthusiastic new members. We're all looking forward to a year of great games and developing our playing skills. **Chris O'Neill**

Cribbage

This is a new group for this year and got off to a good start. We had a few who had never played but most picked it up and completed games, with only one deciding it wasn't for them. Some of the group said they would like to play again before the next scheduled group meeting, so an extra game was organised and enjoyed by those who attended. **Chris O'Neill**

Zentangle

Described as drawing for people who think they can't draw! We all produced tiles which we were pleased with. Although we chatted during the session, there was a lot of quiet time too and we agreed it was a mindful activity which engrossed us without actually recognising it at the time. **Chris O'Neill**

Other Items of Interest

Aln Valley Railway Christmas Specials.

Our member, Stuart Young, has sent this information which may be of interest.

Every year we run Santa Specials in the run up to Christmas. They are very popular and include a return train journey from Lionheart Station to Greenrig Halt (about 3 miles) during which the children have a visit from Santa who, of course, hands out presents. Actually, I am quite impressed by the quality of the presents, each one of which tries to represent the interests of the recipient. This is unashamedly an advertising thing, but customers do tend to say how much they enjoy the event. Anyone wanting tickets can book them through the Aln Valley Railway web site. As I say, they are very popular so if anyone is interested they may wish to book early.

<https://www.alnvalleyrailway.co.uk/>

Thank you to everyone for your contributions. Stay warm and enjoy your groups.

Judy Crow

Editor