

Newsletter

Hartlepool & District u3a

Issue 87, August 2024



Comments from the Chair

One of my jobs is to find speakers for our monthly meetings. This often involves some research and recommendations from other chairs who I have contact with at regular intervals. One of these recommendations was for a river rescue charity so I duly booked them for our July meeting. Bookings are usually made up to 6 months in advance so I always check up a week or so beforehand to check everything is OK and to find out what equipment the speaker would require.

Everything was fine until I received an email from the designated speaker that there had been a mix-up and he was now unavailable. Unfortunately, this was on the day of the meeting and so my initial response was to panic. My next response was to email the committee to see if they could come up with any bright ideas such as a local person who was able to give a talk at very, very short notice. Two suggestions came back almost immediately. One of which was about a local artist who had illustrated comics such as the Lion and the Eagle, as well as given talks in schools. Miraculously, he was free that afternoon and agreed to come. What a relief! Those of you who attended the meeting will know how enjoyable his talk was: interesting and entertaining. What could have been a disaster turned out to be a great success.

It would have been a different story if it was not for the fact that we have a really good committee who are very helpful and ready to step up to the plate when required. We are on the lookout for new committee members as some of us will have to step down at the next AGM so my message is simple: You can make a difference, so come and join us!

Don't forget the hall is shut in August so our next general meeting will be on September 6th with a talk from Mary's Meals.

Take care

Roger

Gardening Group Visit to Haughton Le Skerne Gardens

Liz Milbourn

The National Garden Scheme (NGS) opens privately owned gardens in England, Northern Ireland, Wales, and the Channel Islands to members of the public on selected dates for charity. It was founded in 1927 with the aim of "opening gardens of quality, character and interest to the public for charity".

In July we visited Haughton Le Skerne Gardens, near Darlington (open as part of the NGS) where we saw a range of secluded gardens, ancient and modern, set in this historic village. Our group appreciated the varied styles and planting structures to be found in the gardens.



Selected Gardens at Haughton Le Skerne

© members of the Gardening Group



We also had tea and cakes in the church hall. The weather was fine, until the heavens opened as we made our way back to the cars, and dripping wet through, we drove home only to find that Hartlepool had escaped all the rain!

Art Appreciation Group Visit to Bishop Auckland

Irene Archer

The art appreciation group and other members of the u3a visited Bishop Auckland on the 10th of July to see the many attractions there. Luckily the weather held out for us and just started to pour as we embarked on the bus to go back. Some of us bought annual passes for £30 with a view to going back, possibly early next year, to see the rest of the attractions.



Photo © Irene Archer

Here are a few comments from our group:

The Mining Art Gallery: “Shows how hard a life the mining community had”. “Very interesting, quite sad”. “I have a mining family background. I loved the museum but found it quite profound”. “Very informative staff”.

Other comments about the day: “Very enjoyable trip. Still lots to see on a return trip.” “Totally enjoyed the Faith Museum and the Castle, although not enough time to complete the visit” “Had a quick look around the newly planted walled garden. Looked promising”

So, a trip back is planned for next year. Oh, the food was good too!

Notice Board

Natural History Group

Meetings 2024

- **August**, Thursday 2nd at 1.30 Cowpen Bewley. Meet in the car park for the Butterfly Count.
- **September**, Thursday 5th at 1.30 Hardwick Hall Country Park. Meet near the cafe. Please note that there is a car parking fee.
- **October**, Thursday 3rd at 1.30 Wynyard Woodland Park. Meet outside of the cafe.
- **November**, Thursday 7th at 1.30 the North Gare. Meet in the car park.
- **December**, no meeting

Irene Archer

News from the Tuesday Book Club

At our June meeting we discussed Jane Eyre, which we had all read in our youth and enjoyed rereading with a critical eye. This has led us to choose Agnes Grey by Anne Brontë for our July meeting (on Tuesday 23 July at 2pm, upstairs in the Central Hub), and, following a break in August, Wide Sargasso Sea, Jean Rhys's prequel to Jane Eyre, in September. Then for October, we have chosen two books, a children's favourite, Ballet Shoes, by Noel Streatfeild, and her first novel, written for adults, The Whicharts, which Ballet Shoes was based on. Our programme has developed over the past year into one which has been mostly about rereading classic books which we have enjoyed, including those written for children and young adults.

We are still a very small group and would welcome more participants who are interested in this type of reading and discussion and would bring their own suggestions for future reading. As well as reading the books we have chosen together, we have enjoyed lending each other books and are now wondering about a literary outing to tide us over the summer.

Mary Waldmeyer

Gardening Group: Programme of Events

- **We are having a garden meeting at the end of August, with a plant and gardening book sale, and numbers are limited for this meeting. If you have any spare plants or gardening books you wish to donate, please let us have them.**
- **September's visit is to the RHS autumn show , on Sunday 15th September, which is at Newby Hall, we are going by Lee's coaches again and the price for the coach and admission is £40 .The tickets have been bought for the people who have said they want to go, but if there is anyone else who would like to go, let us know asap and we can book extra tickets, as long as Lee's still have any available .**
- **By October, there won't be much in the way of gardens to visit so we are looking at getting someone to give us a talk, last year a member of the group gave us an interesting talk on weeds, is there anyone else with an interest in particular aspect of gardening, or in a particular range of plants, who could come along and give us a talk or a demonstration? Or do you know someone who could?**

Please contact Liz Milbourn or Helen Eustace if you wish to get in touch.

Who am I?

Compiled by Barry Liddle

- I was born in York on 9th December 1934
- I was educated at a Quaker school in York.
- I was a classmate of Venessa Redgrave when I graduated from London's Central School of Speech and Drama with the Gold Medal as Outstanding Student.
- I made my first professional stage appearance in 1957 with the Old Vic Company in Liverpool.
- I became an award-winning Shakespearean actress over many years.
- I starred in many films, TV plays and dramas.
- I won an Oscar for Best Supporting Actress in Shakespeare in Love (1998) and have been nominated 5 times for Best Actress.
- I also earned 6 British Academy Film Awards, 4 British Academy Television Awards, and 2 Golden Globes and a series of other awards for acting.
- I was married to the actor Michael Williams 1971-2001.
- I have effectively retired from acting due to deteriorating eyesight.
- Younger views know me best from my role in 8 James Bond Films.
- I am a supporter of Everton FC

Who am I? Answer on page10

O for a driech day

Regular walk
Along promenade
Irregular weather
Calendar date July
More like October
Cold; wet; windy
Embrace it all
Oddly exhilarating
North Sea taking advantage
Of North Easterly
White frothy waves
Advance remorselessly
Black-backed gull
Circles overhead
Not a usual sight
This close to the shore
Joined by herring gulls
Which take exception
To the lone interloper
Aerial battle commences
Black-backed outnumbered
Holds ground long enough
To retreat
With dignity intact
Rain stops temporarily
Black clouds over Redcar
One lone jogger passes
Otherwise deserted
Sea front
Seaweed scattered
Blown up and over
The sea wall
No need to check

To see if its damp
To check the weather
Rain restarts
Halt
Close eyes
Perceptions change
Immediately
Notice sounds of waves
Crashing over rocks
Cascading over breakwater
Splashing over pebbles
Trickling back to sea
Feel the wind and rain on face
Coldness of wall under hands
Move onwards
If weather were to improve
Dramatically
Folk might call it
A driech day

Roger Say



A Driech View. © Barry Liddle

Quiz – General British History (Answers on Page 10)

Compiled by Barry Liddle

Q1 What was the childhood nickname of Queen Elizabeth II?

- a Biz
- b Lilibet
- c Lily-Rose

Q2 What is Sir Isaac Newton most famous for?

- a Growing apples and inventing the Cider Press.
- b Discovering Venus and the Rings of Saturn
- c Formulating laws of Motion and Gravitation

Q3 Who is considered Britain's most famous 'landscape gardener' of all time?

- a Beth Chatto
- b Lancelot 'Capability' Brown.
- c Gertrude Jekyll

Q4 Alan Turing and colleagues broke 'The Enigma Code' at which country house and estate during WWII?

- a Bletchley Park
- b Chatsworth House
- c Lyme Park

Q5 When was the 'Equal Franchise Act' passed allowing women over 21 to vote and thus for the first time achieve the same voting rights as men?

- a 1908
- b 1918
- c 1928

Q6 Which Britain invented the Light Bulb?

- a Alexander Graham Bell
- b John Logie Baird
- c Joseph Wilson Swan

Q7 In the 17th and 18th Centuries 'Press Gangs' were well known for:

- a Using physical force to deport homeless people to the colonies
- b Using physical force to recruit men into the British Army
- c Using physical force to recruit men into the Royal Navy

Q8 Which famous ship was restored in Hartlepool and is now berthed in Portsmouth?

- a HMS Victory
- b HMS Warrior
- c SS Great Britain

Q9 Which King affixed his seal to the Magna Carter in 1215 to avert a civil war?

- a King Edward
- b King John
- c King Richard

Q10 At which battle did an English army under King Harold Godwinson defeat an invading Norwegian forced led by King Harald Hardrada on 25 Sept 1066.

- a The Battle of Edgehill
- b The Battle of Marston Moor
- c The Battle of Stamford Bridge

Q11 Which British King was executed outside the banqueting House in Whitehall on 30 January 1649?

- a James I
- b Charles I
- c Charles II

Q12 Who was playing bowls on Plymouth Hoe in 1588 when first news of the 'Spanish Armada' was brought to him?

- a Sir Francis Drake
- b Lord Howard of Effingham
- c Sir Walter Raleigh

Q13 Guy Fawkes, famous for trying to blow up the Houses of Parliament, was born in which northern city?

- a Chester
- b Durham
- c York

Q14 Who were Dave, Dee, Dozy, Beaky, Mick & Tich?

a A popular cartoon serial on British TV during the 1960s

b A 1960s pop group.

c The nicknames of Manchester United's 5 forwards when they won the European Cup in 1967/8

Q15 Who was the first man to run a sub-4-minute mile in 1954?

a Sir Roger Bannister

b Sir Chris Brasher

c Sir Chris Chataway

Q16 Cadbury, Rowntree, and Fry's chocolate manufacturers all have historical links to:

a Anglicanism

b Presbyterianism

c Quakerism

Q17 He built the Great Western Railway, the SS Great Britain and numerous important bridges and tunnels. Who was he?

a Isambard Kingdom Brunel

b Robert Stephenson

c James Watt

Q18 Who was the first ever Cricketer to score 6 sixes in one over in 1968 at Swansea?

a Sir Viv Richards

b Sir Garfield Sobers

c Sir Clyde Walcott

Q19 He was well known for painting scenes of life in the industrial districts of North West England in the mid-20th century. Who was he?

a Thomas Gainsborough

b L S Lowry

c J M W Turner

Q20 During WWII he led a decisive victory at El Alamein, Egypt and was commander of all land forces in Operation Overlord, the code name for the Battle of Normandy, under overall command of Eisenhower. Who was he?

a Field Marshal Claude Auchinleck

b Field Marshall Douglas Haig

c Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery

Directory

List of Committee Members for 2024/25

Chair, Speaker Finder & Web Admin.

Roger Say

Vice Chair–

Vacant

Business Secretary –

Wendy Borthwick

Treasurer –

Cliff Cordiner

Membership Secretary –

Andrea Reid

Group Co-ordinator & Beacon Admin.

Pauline Williamson

Minutes Secretary

Vacant

Committee – Keith Alder; Irene Archer

Interest Group Leaders

Archaeology/History Group: Chris McLoughlin.

Art Appreciation: Co-Leaders: Irene Archer, Andrea Reid.

Board Games: Irene Williams.

Bridge: Phil Jefferies.

Chess Group: Roger Say.

Coffee & Chat Jacky Armstrong

Creative Writing Group: Roger Say.

Family History: Co- Leaders: Jacky Armstrong, Pat Rutter.

Film Group: Contact Phil Jefferies.

Fun with Fabrics: Ann Say

Gardens and Gardening: Co-Leaders: Liz Milbourn and Helen Eustace

Lawn Bowls: Ray Elliston.

Music: Steve Cole

Natural History Group: Co- Leaders: Irene Archer, Margaret Andrews and Beryl Turnbull.

Photography for Fun Group: Ray Elliston.

Quiz Team: John Campbell.

Reading Group: Andrea Reid

Shibashi Exercise Group: Marjorie Reynolds.

Tuesday Book Club: Mary Waldmeyer

'View to Vue': Roger Say.

Walking Group: Keith Alder

Roles of Non- Committee Members

Newsletter Editor-

Barry Liddle

Answers to Quiz

Q1 b Lilibet. Q2 c Formulating laws of Motion and Gravitation. Q3 b Lancelot 'Capability' Brown. Q4 a Bletchley Park Q5 c 1928. Q6 c Joseph Wilson Swan. Q7 c Using physical force to recruit men into the Royal Navy Q8 b HMS Warrior. Q9 b King John Q10 c The Battle of Stamford Bridge Q11 b Charles 1 Q12 a Sir Francis Drake Q13 c York Q14 b A 1960s pop group. Q15 a Sir Roger Bannister Q16 c Quakerism Q17 a Isambard Kingdom Brunel Q18 b Sir Garfield Sobers Q19 b L S Lowry Q20 c Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery

Answer to Who am I? - Dame Judi Dench