

# Newsletter

Hartlepool & District u3a

Issue 94, March 2025



## Comments from the Chair

By the time you read this winter will be drawing to a close and meteorological spring will have arrived. Not before time, I hear some of you say. However, those of you who enjoy the cold and dreary winter days can take comfort in the fact that astronomical spring does not start until March 20th. Take your pick! Personally, I go for starting spring on March 20th (meteorological) and winter on December 21st (astronomical). This makes for the shortest possible winter. If there a flaw in the logic of this, I intend to ignore it.

This brings me on to our next general meeting on Friday March 7th when you will be able to take your pick of finger food provided by your good selves, as this meeting is going to be a social event. Tea and coffee will be provided free of charge as usual for these events. This is an opportunity for everyone to have a chat and make new friends.

As well as enjoying each other's company there will also be the opportunity to have a look at the activities of our interest groups. We have over twenty interest groups at present and this will be an opportunity to chat to group leaders and find out about their groups. Don't forget that if you have an idea to start a new group you can come and chat to one of the committee who will be only too glad to give you a helping hand and point you in the right direction.

We have a great variety of speakers lined up for this year including Denis Fox who was a great success on his last visit, Kelly Close on cyber-crime and Mark Braithwaite talking about 'Double Jeopardy' to name but three. Watch this space for further announcements.

Meanwhile

Take care

Roger

## Membership Renewal 2025

Cliff Cordiner, Treasurer.

It's that time of the year again, and preparations for Membership renewal are well underway as we look forward to some of the exciting things we have planned for the coming year.

An email will be sent shortly inviting you to rejoin for those of you who have chosen this form of communication.

Membership renewal via online banking has proved popular and we hope more members will embrace this form of payment. It is the easiest and most secure way to pay. However, you can still pay by cheque or cash for those who favour that method of payment.

The good news is that the subscription for 2025 will remain at the current level of £20 (or £16 for Associate Members). Those who wish to pay by cash or cheque can do so at the general meeting on 4th April 2025.

Anyone who wishes to renew by online bank transfer can do so any time after 4th April 2025, please do not make payment by this method before then. If you wish to pay by BACS and do not already do so, let us know and we will email you the relevant bank details.

As you renew your membership, please can I remind you to take a few moments to check your contact details and emergency contact and let us know if anything has changed.

Can I also remind you that if you do not already take the u3a magazine "Third Age Matters", now would be a good time to let us know if you would like to subscribe. It is issued quarterly so just let us know your preference as you renew your membership. It is full of useful and informative articles, puzzles, recipes, and exclusive offers for u3a members.

Conversely if you no longer wish to receive it, please let us know now as the u3a are charged £4 per head for every magazine. Nobody likes to spend money they do not have to, and it would free up funds to be spent elsewhere for the benefit of everyone.

Interest groups continue to go from strength to strength with several new ones springing up, and our membership numbers are continuing to increase steadily. If you have any suggestions for other new groups, you would like to see please let us know.

And finally, without a committee there is no u3a. Several committee members will be stepping down soon, so if you would like to help, please let us know. New faces are always welcome. As you know, several u3as have had to fold over the last year or so as they have been unable to fill committee roles. It would be sad if Hartlepool was added to that list.

'Then and Now'  
Martin Green



The Beach near Easington in 1989 showing the impact of colliery waste and today, as an attractive part of the Durham Heritage Coast.

(Photographs © Martin Green)



## Memories of School

### Jacky Armstrong

When I was 7, I transferred from Oxford Road Mixed Infants School to Elwick Road Junior Girls School. A different school in many respects as we had no boys, had to wear a uniform and we had a school ditty.

*Green and Gold, Green and Gold, These two colours are so bold,  
They belong to our school, And it's in West Hartlepool*

What's all that about you may ask. Hardly Shakespearian.

What else did we have. We had Miss Nora Holdforth, the most wonderful lady as our first teacher. She taught us everything including knitting and how to use a sweeping brush. She wore a gold bangle above her elbow. I was fascinated by this. She was a wonderful piano player. Every time I hear Jerusalem; I can hear her playing it with all the twiddly bits between the verses. (Incidentally the house I now live in once belonged to Miss Holdforth).

Then we had Miss Kindred, the West Hartlepool equivalent of Miss Jean Brodie. We were all the *creme de la creme*. She wanted each and every one of us to do well and wo betide you if you didn't want to.

So, I turned up on my first day, newly bedecked in green and gold. We were taken round the school to see where our cloakroom was, Miss Kindred's office and the toilets which were outside across the yard. We had not to go up the stairs near the door as that was to the senior girl's department. Miss Kindred's ambition for us all was that we would all pass the scholarship and go to West Hartlepool High School for Girls, so not needing to climb the stairs.

First thing each Monday morning we started the day with two things 1) taking your savings money to school to be deposited in the Yorkshire Penny Bank and 2) taking your salvage.

I knew why we had a savings system, which even with sixpence or a shilling deposited every week of the term soon built up. But salvage. Why salvage? I assumed it was to reuse your old papers but no more. I only know it was a competition to see which class collected the most and presumably which school.

Each Monday I would go to school with my bundle of papers neatly tied with string. At home each week my father got the previous weeks *Express and Star* newspaper from his father in Wolverhampton. When some had been taken out to make paper sticks,

squares to be hung up in the loo and paper to wrap the sea coal in to make parcels for the fire, the rest, with some editions of the *Daily Herald*, went into the salvage bundle. We would march as a class to proudly place our bundle of salvage on the piles in the cloakroom. All being proud that we had helped.

But helped what and why. I had no idea until today, when I have accessed some old newspapers on 'Find my Past'. From *Country Life* November 21, 1941, the headline 'Turning Paper into Munitions'. So, this is why I was doing my bit in 1950. We probably weren't told the real reason in case we cried (I don't think we worried in those days).

The article was a bit dramatic, but it showed you photos of the salvage being sorted by hand to separate the different qualities of paper.

The article was cut short, so I am not sure what sort of munitions my salvage helped with but nice to know that, at 7 years old, I did my bit.

### **Wanted- Your Memories of School**

**I had never heard of children taking 'Salvage' to school until I read Jacky's article. Which made me realise that our memories of school can be a rich source of cultural history. So, I would like to propose that we make 'Memories of School' a regular column in this Newsletter.**

**I am therefore inviting all u3a members to consider sending in a short anecdote of a paragraph or so, or longer articles of a page or two. To aid your memory, these are some general themes that you might find helpful:**

- **Any unusual or memorable events that took place at school**
- **Memories of inspirational or eccentric teachers**
- **Memories of the different games played in the playground**
- **Memories of how your school commemorated significant national events, such as the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II**
- **Memories of school sports and matches against other schools**
- **Memories of school dinners**
- **Memories of school lessons and teaching methods**
- **Memories of Christmas and Easter preparations.**
- **Memories of Potato Picking Week.**

**Barry Liddle, Editor**

Gardening Group  
Liz Milbourn and Helen Eustace



Photographs: © Paul Eustace



The first Garden Group meeting of 2025 was to Greatham Snowdrop Sunday in February. We had a pleasant walk through the snowdrop filled woodland and enjoyed hot drinks and cakes in the community centre afterwards.

# Notice Board

## Tuesday Book Club

Our Tuesday Book Club usually meets upstairs at the Central Hub at 2pm on the fourth Tuesday of the month. We have had a good start to the year with *The Enchanted April*, by Elizabeth von Arnim, in January and *The Bookshop*, by Penelope Fitzgerald in February. Both of these, and the other books we have chosen this year are prizewinning classics with thought-provoking themes, great plots and interesting characters. They have also all been adapted into films, which can be streamed or watched on DVD and which add another dimension to our discussions. We don't all like the same books, or their screen adaptations, but we are interested in each other's points of view.

Our choice for March, *Never Let Me Go*, by Kazuo Ishiguro, follows the story of Kathy H, who looks back at her time at boarding school. It's only gradually that you begin to realise that you are reading a book set in an alternative recent past. It's a lovely and thought provoking book, and asks a lot of important questions about what makes us human.

We have space for new members, so if you like the idea of sharing your reading experience of the books we've chosen, please get in touch. We will be at the meeting on Friday 4 March with copies of the following books for anyone interested to look at.

- March 25 *Never Let Me Go*, Kazuo Ishiguro
- April 29 *Under the Greenwood Tree*, Thomas Hardy
- May 27 *Atonement*, Ian McEwan
- June 24 *I Capture the Castle*, Dodie Smith
- July 22 *Hotel du Lac*, Anita Brookner

**Mary Waldmeyer**

## AFTERNOON TEA

We are meeting at Hardwicke Hall at Blackhall on Tuesday, 25th February for Afternoon Tea at 2.30 pm. There is still an opportunity to book. £18 or £20 with Prosecco. (This includes a tip).

Names and money to **Jacky Armstrong**

## Natural History Programme 2025

Our meetings usually take place on the first Thursday of the month at 1.30 at various local venues. We generally walk between half and one and a half miles on easy footpaths, usually on the flat.

- March 6th Meet at Newburn Bridge at Seaton Carew. At the moment parking is free. We will walk to the marina and drop in for a coffee if the weather is chilly.
- April 3rd Headland. Meet at the car park in front of the Borough Hall.
- May 1st. Saltholme. Meet in the entrance. There is a charge for non-members of the RSPB.
- June 5th Seaton Carew. Meet at the sea front where the nesting Terns are. There is a free car park in the park before you reach the sea front.
- July 3rd Cowpen Bewley. Meet in the car park.
- July 22nd Tuesday We may join the gardening group on a trip to Breezy Knees Garden near York. Liz Milbourn has circulated details about this.
- August 7th Summerhill Meet in the car park to do the Butterfly count.
- September 4th Blackhall Rocks. Meet in the car park off the main road.
- October 2nd Burn Valley Gardens to look for fungi. Meet at the zebra crossing entrance on Baden Street.
- November 6th Peoples centre for an indoor meeting. Last year we enjoyed a talk on weeds by Carole, bird song identification by Irene and Margaret and Geoff gave us an interesting talk about Thorpe Thewles wood.
- December No meeting.

**Further details from Irene Archer, Margaret Andrews and Beryl Turnbull.**

### COFFEE AND CHAT

You are welcome to join us on 3rd March at 10.30 am in the Golden Lion (next to Aldi). The group meets the first Monday of each month.

It is an informal group where you can socialise, get to know different people and, amongst other things, have a go at putting the World to right!

**Jacky Armstrong**

### LUNCH AT HARDWICKE HALL MANOR HOTEL, BLACKHALL

I have booked a table for lunch at Hardwicke Hall Manor Hotel on Wednesday 16th April at 12 o'clock.

I have not booked food. You can make your own choice when you get there. Soup and sandwiches, Grandma's Carvery, Burger etc.

I have booked the table only. Let me know if you would like to come and then I can inform HH how many of us there will be.

If this is successful, we can book further dates.

**Jacky Armstrong**

## Art Appreciation Group: Visit to Bishop Auckland

A visit to Bishop Auckland is taking place on the 9<sup>th</sup> April, 9:45, returning at 3:00.

A 16-seater bus will leave from the Golden Lion car park.

The Art Appreciation group will have priority but there will be some seats available for other u3a members. Please give your names and contact number to Andrea Reid or Irene Archer if you are interested at the general meeting or the next art group meeting. **The coach will cost E15, this must be paid by the March meeting.**

The cost of some of the attractions are:

- The Spanish Gallery E12.50
- The Mining Art Gallery E6
- Castle and Faith Museum C18

Other things to explore are the Walled Garden, the Deer Park and the Auckland Tower where you can purchase tickets for the attractions, learn more about the history of Bishop Auckland and enjoy far reaching views from the top of the tower.

Refreshments can be obtained at the kitchen in Auckland Castle or the new tapas restaurant next to the Spanish Gallery. Hope you can join us.

**Andrea Reid and Irene Archer**

## The Art of Photography

The *Photography for Fun Group*, in need of some artistic inspiration, recently visited the impressive Bob Abley Art Gallery in Spennymoor. Located over several floors in the Town Hall, the gallery is home to a permanent collection of Norman Cornish paintings of local mining life and community scenes which have achieved world-wide recognition. The gallery also has a broad range of work by other regional artists with many fine prints available to purchase. The Town Hall is also home to the Durham Mining Museum, which we intend to visit at a future date. We may also walk the Norman Cornish Trail, which takes about 50 minutes and includes the locations of many of his most iconic works. A free guide to the trail is available from the Museum if any anyone wishes to make their own to visit this splendid location.

**Barry Liddle**

## Garden Group Programme

At the next u3a usual monthly meeting on Friday 7th March we will be having a plants, seeds and gardening book sale. Please bring along any plants, seeds (within sow by date) and gardening books that you have spare, proceeds to group funds.

The March meeting will be on Monday 24th March at 12 noon and we will meet for a coffee or lunch at the Dutch Garden Centre, Ladysmith St, TS25 1NZ (behind big Tesco). If you are planning to have lunch there, the cafe would appreciate it if you gave them your meal choices in advance. We have a copy menu, and we can email you one if required.

We are planning the following Garden group visits, with Lees of Durham coaches;

- Friday 2nd May Stokesley Market and Cherry Hill Garden centre £20
- Friday May 25th May Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Wakefield. £31 Joint visit with the Arts Group who are organising it.
- Sunday 1st June, Harlow Carr gardens near Harrogate, £36 including admission.
- Wednesday 25th June. Thornton Hall gardens near Darlington by minibus not a Lees trip.
- Tuesday 22nd July Breezy Knees Gardens, nursery and cafe near York. £35 including admission.
- Wednesday 10th September, Northallerton market and Arcadia Garden Centre £19.

Payment for these trips is required before booking, N.B. we do get a £2 reduction on the Lees prices above for group bookings. Please let us know if you want to go on any of these trips, if you haven't already put your name down. We will be booking the June 1st trip to Harlow Carr gardens in early March.

**Liz Milbourn and Helen Eustace**

### Quiz Anyone?

Each quiz will be held at 2 pm in the Community Room at the Central Hub (Library) on  
Tuesday 18th March  
Tuesday 15th April  
Tuesday 20th May.

It is a joint quiz with Stockton u3a. Everyone is friendly and if you are a Newby, you are welcome to join any table. There is a break for refreshments, which are provided. There is a relaxed atmosphere. Although we are the University of the Third Age, it is not like University Challenge, so don't be daunted.

**Jacky Armstrong**

### Spot the Bird Brains

People chattering on bus: Part1  
People chattering on bus translation:  
Chitter chatter chitter chatter  
Chitter chatter chitter chatter

Sparrows chattering in hedge: Part 1  
Sparrows chattering in hedge translation:  
Mornin' mate having a good day?  
Not bad mate. Bit breezy early on.  
That bloody human was late  
Putting out the grub again.  
Yeah, lazy blighter.  
Bit chilly out here  
Hanging around waiting.

People chattering on bus: Part 2  
People chattering on bus translation:  
Chitter chatter chitter chatter  
Chitter chatter chitter chatter

Sparrows chattering in hedge Part 2  
Sparrows chattering in hedge translation:  
Evening mate. How's it been?  
Fair to middlin. What about you?  
Not bad. Bit of a fracas with  
Those blinking pigeons again.  
Yes, they're a bloomin' nuisance.  
How's the missus?  
Feeling broody.  
Waiting for spring.  
Shouldn't be long now.

People chattering on bus: Part 3  
People chattering in on bus translation:  
Chitter chatter chitter chatter  
Chitter chatter chitter chatter

Sparrows chattering in hedge: part 3  
Sparrows chattering in hedge  
translation:  
Soon be nest- building time again mate  
Yeah, got me eye on a good spot.  
Missus found it last autumn  
We'll check it out soon.  
Stay safe mate.  
Yeah, you too.  
Goodnight.  
Goodnight.

**Roger Say**

### Down Memory Lane: Creative Writing Group 2018



## Creative Writing Group: A Day to Remember

Roger Say

The day started full of promise. Woke up just before dawn, opened the curtains and was greeted by the glorious sight of the emerging sunrise. Truly awesome in the original meaning of the word. The greatest artist could not have recreated the scene because nobody could recreate the essence and magical nature of it. A wonderful start to the day. You can't help but feel pure joy when you are met with such a scene. Sparrows were starting to chatter in the hedge, fishing boats were coming into the harbour with their catches, and all was well with the world. It all augured well for the rest of the day. Sun was shining and only a few wispy cirrus clouds in the sky. A grand day to be alive!

I took the opportunity to go for an early morning walk to breathe in the atmosphere. Dog walkers were met with a cheery greeting and a smile. Life was good. Even the sea seemed to be in good humour. A gentle zephyr calmed the surface down, and all was serene.

The rest of the morning went without incident. After a light lunch it was time to get ready to go into town to watch The Pools play. It was a perfect day for the match. Although we were in the midst of winter the temperature was well above freezing and so I set off with high hopes of a good match and a good result. I reached the bus stop in good time and was surprised to see that nobody else was waiting. Usually, there were two or three other supporters there, but I didn't give that much thought. The bus arrived on time, so that was another good sign. Soon we arrived at the ground.

It all seemed very quiet. Hmmm, I thought to myself. Something is not quite right. Surely the match has not been postponed! Surely, I had not got the time of the kick off wrong! I checked my phone. No, the day was right, and the time was right. The only problem was that it was an away match and I had misread the fixture list and put it in my diary as a home fixture. Ho hum.

Disconsolately, I made my way back to the bus stop. Just before I reached it the bus sailed past me. And then the wind rose, clouds came overhead and the rain started. I got thoroughly drenched. What had started out a day to remember had become a day to forget!

## Britain in the 1950s Quiz

Compiled by Barry Liddle

Q1 When did the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II take place at Westminster Abbey?

- a 1951
- b 1953
- c 1956

Q2 'Dixon of Dock Green' was a popular TV series, which ran for many years from 1955. Can you remember who played the lead role of PC George Dixon?

- a Peter Byrne
- b Jack Hawkins
- c Jack Warner

Q3 Who was the British Prime Minister during the Suez Crisis of 1956?

- a Winston Churchill
- b Anthony Eden
- c Harold Macmillan

Q4 The children's TV puppet show 'The Flower Pot Men' was launched in 1952 and ran for many years. The show featured Bill and Ben, and a third character called:

- a Little Annie
- b Little Sue
- c Little Weed

Q5 Lonnie Donegan was known as the:

- a 'King of Folk'
- b 'King of Jazz'
- c 'King of Skiffle'

Q6 Who was the Manager of the men's England Football team during the 1950s?

- a Joe Mercer
- b Alf Ramsey
- c Walter Winterbottom

Q7 To help recover from the War, the government organised a nationwide celebration of British design, science, technology and identity. The main event was in the summer of 1951 on the South Bank of the Thames. What was the event called?

- a Festival of Britain
- b Great Exhibition
- c The Expo Exhibition

Q8 What is the longest running programme in British TV history with the same presenter?

- a 'Dee Time' with Simon Dee
- b 'The Sky at Night' with Patrick Moore
- c 'Wogan' with Terry Wogan

Q9 The biggest hit in the UK in the 1950s was a song called 'Rock Around the Clock'. Which artist recorded this song?

- a Bill Haley & His Comets
- b Jerry Lee Lewis
- c Little Richard

Q10 The 'Archers' radio programme began its national run on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1951. Can you name the fictional village in which it is set?

- a Alderford
- b Ambridge
- c Antingham

Q11 Fred Trueman played cricket for Yorkshire and England and was the first bowler to take 300 wickets in a Test career. He was well known by his nickname. Which was?

- a 'Fiery Fred'
- b 'Silky Fred'
- c 'Speedy Fred'

Q12 Who was the Archbishop of Canterbury throughout the 1950s?

- a Geoffrey Fisher
- b Michael Ramsey
- c Robert Runcie

Q13 Who was the chief creator and writer of 'The Goon Show'?

- a Spike Milligan
- b Harry Secombe
- c Peter Sellers

Q14 In 'Bridge on the River Kwai', a 1957 epic war film, which actor played the role of a British colonel whose perverse sense of duty leads him to help his Japanese captors build a bridge?

- a Alec Guinness
- b Jack Hawkins
- c James Mason

Q15 I was a British Formula One racing driver from 1951 to 61 and was widely regarded as one of the greatest drivers to never win the Formular One World Drivers' Championship. Who am I?

- a Jim Clark
- b Graham Hill
- c Stirling Moss

Q16 Fanny Cradock hosted a popular cookery show in the 1950s. What was the name of her long-suffering husband who assisted her?

- a Johnnie
- b Michael
- c Sidney

Q17 Which British comedy actor and writer of the 1950s was profoundly deaf and had specially made spectacles which acted as a bone-conducting hearing aid?

- a Deryck Guyler
- b Eric Sykes
- c Harry Worth

Q18 In the 1950s, Teddy Boys had a distinctive look. All the following attributes are correct, except one. Which is the odd one out?

- a Slicked quiff hairstyles
- b Short tailored jackets
- c Bootlace Ties
- d Drainpipe Trousers
- e Beetle-Crusher Shoes

Q19 When did Rationing, introduced during WWII, finally come to an end?

- a 1951
- b 1954
- c 1956

Q20 Only one of the following was invented in the 1950s. Which one?

- a The Audio Cassette
- b The Jet Engine
- c The Hovercraft

# Directory

## List of Committee Members for 2025

### 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,

Paul Eustace, Helen Eustace.

## Interest Group Leaders

**Archaeology/History Group:** Chris McLoughlin.

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

**Board Games:** Irene Williams.

**Backgammon Group** Ann Gardiner

**Bridge:** Phil Jefferies.

**Chess Group:** Roger Say.

**Coffee & Chat** Jacky Armstrong

**Concert Group:** Pauline Williamson

**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:** Vacant

**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

## Quiz Answers

Q1 b 1953; Q2 c Jack Warner; Q3 b Anthony Eden; Q4 c Little Weed; Q5 c 'King of Skiffle';  
Q6 c Walter Winterbottom; Q7 a Festival of Britain; Q8 b 'The Sky at Night' with Patrick Moore;  
Q9 a Bill Haley & His Comets; Q10 b Ambridge; Q11 a 'Fiery Fred'; Q12 a Geoffrey Fisher;  
Q13 a Spike Milligan; Q14 a Alec Guinness; Q15 c Stirling Moss; Q16 a Johnnie; Q17 b Eric Sykes; Q18 b Short tailored jackets; Q19 b 1954; Q20 c The Hovercraft.

## Copy Wanted for This Newsletter

Articles, Short Stories, Interesting Photographs (with captions), Limericks & Poems.

Items for the Newsletter's 'Notice Board' are also welcomed.

All contributions to the next Newsletter are most welcome.

Copy deadline for the next issue is 20 March 2025.

**Barry Liddle, Newsletter Editor**