Newsletter

Hartlepool & District u3a

Issue 114, November 2026



A Panoramic View from Lord Stones Country Park. *Photograph* © Barry Liddle

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Comments from the Chair



We are very lucky to have such a lively u3a which is growing and evolving all the time. Our membership is increasing month by month and new groups are starting up on a regular basis. At the last count we had 24 active groups with the recent additions of a Techy group and a Genealogy group so we are spoilt for choice. A big thank you to all of you involved in creating such a vibrant u3a.

We have also introduced a 'Buddy' system to help new members find their feet so thank you to those members who have already signed up to give their services.

Our last speaker featured Margaret Bozic telling us all about the Lit and Phil of Newcastle and it was attended by 46% of our total membership which is great to see. We will be seeing her again next year on a completely different topic. Our next speaker on Friday 5th November will be Philip (not Michael) Caine and his talk is entitled 'From Barrow to Baghdad and back'. This looks likely to be a fascinating talk so I am really looking forward to it. After that we have our Christmas party on the 4th of December to look forward to. Rumour has it that I will be singing 'IIkey Moor Baht'at' as part of the 'entertainment' so don't say you haven't been warned!

Our guest speaker list for 2027 is already filling up and we have booked a talk on the history and future development of the Staincliffe hotel for our January general meeting so that is something to look forward to and sustain us while those long hot days of summer are fading into a distant memory.

As always

Take care

Roger

Expanding Horizons: A Report on National u3a Week in Hartlepool

Helen Eustace

The third week of September was designated 'National u3a Week' and this year's theme was 'Expanding Horizons': an invitation to try something new just for fun. Quite a few of our members took part and reported back with what they were doing. Thanks to everyone who joined in and there's a prize for the most random idea.

A couple of people were keen to try Jet Skiing which is available locally. For various reasons this did not get off the ground or onto the water! I must admit I was tempted, but after seeing loads of jelly fish in the water it was a no from me. Maybe next year.

Some of this year's entries from Hartlepool and District u3a were:

1. Taking up meditation
2. Learning the phonetic alphabet
3. Doing Sudoku
4. Researching French wines for our 'Think and Drink' Group. We had fun tasting them.
5. Learning Spanish. A member wants to be able to speak to her Granddaughter in Spanish. We would love to start a u3a group if any of our members can speak Spanish fluently.
6. Learning to solve cryptic crosswords. This member signed up for the online u3a sessions led by Henry Howarth, bought his book and is signing up for a six-week course.
7. Learning to play Backgammon. Honor Niland (I have named her because she has provided a photo) joined the u3a Backgammon group



8. Learning the words to 'On Ilkla Moor baht 'at'. A very popular traditional folk song from Yorkshire. We are hoping to hear a rendition of this at our Christmas General Meeting.

Finally, I decided to eat a McDonalds Big Mac for the first time to see what all the fuss was about and I have to say I was totally underwhelmed!

Stockton Steam

Martin Green

Every year several hundred charter trains headed by steam engines venture out across Britain's railway network, they range from those aimed at enthusiasts, perhaps using a newly restored engine or visiting rarely used lines, to high class dining trains, or perhaps just along scenic routes. But we never see them at Hartlepool largely because of restrictions in Sunderland's underground station and under the Nexus Metro wires. So possibly the nearest that a steam engine can get is Stockton. Of course, there was last year's celebration of the 200th anniversary of the Stockton & Darlington Railway when the replica Locomotion No.1 famously arrived there from Darlington, but other visits are comparatively seldom.

However earlier his month Stockton witnessed one of those rare events. The occasion was a



train from Carnforth (home to West Coast Railways and its fleet of preserved diesel and steam locomotives) via Leeds and York to Whitby. It was pulled by a highly polished Royal Scot engine No 46115 *Scots Guardsman* originally built for the London Midland & Scottish Railway in 1930s but upgraded about 15 years later. If you have travelled along the Esk Valley line you will be aware that because of a quirk of history all trains have to reverse at Battersby. So, in order to keep No 46115 at the front when arriving at Whitby, the train reversed at Stockton and was pulled by a 1960s Class 47 diesel locomotive (which had until now been on the rear) from there to Battersby. Job done!



Member's Notice Board

Welcome aboard: three new faces this October

Please give a warm u3a welcome to Susan, Steve and Alys, who joined us this month. All three heard about us by word of mouth, which shows that a friendly chat is still our best advert. So, keep spreading the word!

Susan loves travelling and a good book. She also enjoys walking and trips to the theatre and cinema.

So, Walking, Strollers, Reading, History and Art Appreciation leaders, watch this space, as you may soon be hearing from our new members about joining your groups.

If you see any of our new members at the next meeting, please go and say hello.

Pauline Williamson, Membership Secretary

Interested in Dancing?

We are thinking about starting a new group called 'Dance, Mix and Mingle' and are hoping to have our first dance in January 2027.

Venue and date to be announced.

Maggie Hendry will be having an information table at the next general meeting on Friday November 6th, to gain and give information.

Let us know your thoughts

Maggie Hendry and Helen Eustace.

Anyone for Badminton?

We are thinking of creating a badminton group. You don't have to be an Olympic class athlete to take part. All you need is the ability to move your arms and legs, we can then teach you how to play. If interested, please get in touch

Helen Eustace, Groups' Co-ordinator

Musical Instruments Quiz

Phil Jefferies has supplied this entertaining brain teaser for music lovers (the original creator of the quiz is not known).

These are all cryptic clues for musical instruments:

1. Ice cream holder
2. Champagne glass
3. Geometric figure
4. Shipping line
5. Potato
6. Body part
7. Something to keep oil in
8. Stolen goods
9. Lager
10. Something a fisherman might do

Answers are available at the bottom of page 12. Good luck.



Photograph of the Week

Taken by

Ray Elliston.

Dates for Your Diary

Helen Eustace, Groups' Co-ordinator.

October 26th 'Techy Group' @ Utilita, York Road between 2pm and 4pm.
This group is now a computer tuition group, suitable for complete beginners as well as those who would like to refresh their computer skills. We are still happy to try and resolve and 'techy' problems you may have. Today's module will include 'Getting online and searching'. For further information contact Jan Jenner

October 27th Tuesday Book Club @ Newcastle Building Society, York Road.
This month's book is '*Death in Venice'* by Thomas Mann. We still have one space in our group if you would like to join.For further information contact Mary Waldmeyer.

October 21st Stroll and Chat
The date has been changed for this month from the fourth Wednesday to the third due to it being half term on the fourth week and some people being away. We will meet at 11am at Seaton Carew. The starting point will be confirmed nearer the time. For more information contact Helen Eustace.

November 2nd Coffee and Chat 10.30am at The Golden Lion, Dunston Road,All welcome. For further information contact Jacky Armstrong

November 4th Garden Group, Trip to Strikes Garden Centre, Stokesley
We will be picked up from the Golden Lion at 11.00am and collected from Stokesley at 2.15pm. Cost of transport will be approximately £12.For further information contact Helen Eustace or Liz Milbourn

November 5th Natural History @ Peoples Centre 1.30pm
A talk by Carole Lloyd regarding animals and plants which have come to the UK which are a nuisance. The Garden Group have also been invited to this meeting. For more information contact Irene Archer, Beryl Turnbul or Margaret Andrews

November 6th, General Meeting 2pm
Our speaker this month will be Philip Caine on 'Barrow to Baghdad and back again'.

November 9th Backgammon @ Citizens Advice at 2pm.
Come along to play a game of backgammon. New members welcome.For more information contact Anne Gardiner

November 9th 'Techy Group' @ Utilita, York Road between 2pm and 4pm.
This group is now a computer tuition group, suitable for complete beginners as well as those who would like to refresh their computer skills. We are still happy to try and resolve and 'techy' problems you may have. Today's module will include....
'Email and Digital safety'. For further information contact Jan Jenner

November 10th Poetry Group @ Peoples Centre between 2 and 4pm
This month we will be doing poems on birds. For more information contact Margaret Chappell.
November 11th Art Appreciation Our meeting will be held at Christ Church at 10.30am to see the annual Hartlepool Art Club exhibition. For more information contact Irene Archer or Andrea Reid.
November 12th Archaeology and History @ People's Centre 10.30am until 12.
Margaret Bozic returns to give a talk on the crossing from Newcastle to Carlisle via trains, road, canal (?)
November 13th Creative Writing Group. @ 2pm in the Arts Centre Café. For more information contact Roger Say
November 16th Excursion Group. Trip to Castle Howard. This year's theme is Charles Dickens. Spaces are now limited so please let Helen Eustace or Andrea Reid know if you would like to attend.
November 16th Play Reading @ People's Centre, Raby Road between 1pm and 3pm
For further information contact Carol Currie.
November 18th Quiz Group @ People's Centre at 2pm.
For further details contact John Campbell. New members always welcome
November 22nd Excursion Group
We are planning to go to the Wynyard Hall Christmas fayre. There will be stalls selling gifts and crafts, decorations and festive goodies. There will also be festive food and drink along with carol singers and live bands. The entrance cost is £7 for concessions. Tickets have to be booked in advance and cannot be purchased at the door.
We will book a minibus if there are enough of us and consider car share if there aren't. Tickets are limited so if you would like to go then please let Andrea Reid or Helen Eustace know.
November 23rd 'Techy Group' @ Utilita, York Road between 2pm and 4pm.
This group is now a computer tuition group, suitable for complete beginners as well as those who would like to refresh their computer skills.We are still happy to try and resolve and 'techy' problems you may have. Today's module will include……'Everyday Utility and Troubleshooting'. For more information contact Jan Jenner
November 24th Tuesday Book Club @ Newcastle Building Society, York Road
For further information contact Mary Waldmeyer.
November 25th Stroll and Chat
Details to follow
December 3rd General History
There will not be a General History meeting in December
December 4th General Meeting 2pm
This will be our Christmas social meeting.

December 7th Coffee and Chat
10.30am at The Golden Lion, Dunston Road, All welcome. For further information contact Jacky Armstrong.
December 8th Poetry Group @ Peoples Centre between 2 and 4pm.
This month we will be doing 'Christmassy' poems. For more information contact Margaret Chappell.
December 8th U3a Christmas Meal
£18.95 for the carvery,12 noon at Hardwicke Manor Hotel, £5 deposit required.
For more information contact Jacky Armstrong
December 9th Art Appreciation '
There will not be an Art Appreciation meeting in December
December 10th Archaeology and History
Details to follow
December 11th, Creative Writing Group.
2pm in the Arts Centre Café. For more information contact Roger Say
December 12th Garden Group and open to all.
The garden group are going on the Lees Coach trip to the Alnwick Garden Winter Light Trail. A late afternoon excursion to the Alnwick Gardens. Not only can you see the lights in the Alnwick Garden but also see the lights in Lilidorei. It will cost £33 and this will include both attractions. Pick up will be at Hartlepool Transport Interchange (next door to the railway station).For further information contact Helen Eustace or Liz Milbourn.
December 14th Backgammon @ Citizens Advice Bureau at 2pm.
Come along to play a game of backgammon. New members welcome. For more information contact Anne Gardiner
December 15th Garden Group
Christmas Meal at midday at The Raby Arms. There is a Christmas menu, but you can order off their normal menu too. Please let Helen Eustace or Liz Milbourn know if you would like to attend
December 16th Quiz Group People's Centre at 2pm. For further details contact John Campbell. New members always welcome
December 24th Reading Group (Andrea's)
There will not be a Reading Group in December**.**

2027

January 29th Natural History
Burn Valley at 10.00am for the Big Garden Bird Watch.
February Natural History
Group lunch. Date, venue and time to be decided.

Obituary

John Emerson MBE

John was a member of our u3a for several years and we are saddened to report that he died peacefully in his sleep in hospital on September 5th, 2026. John was 97 years old. He is survived by his beloved wife Pat (also a former u3a member) and their daughter Gillian and the wider family.

A Funeral service to celebrate his life was held at Stranton Grange Crematorium on 1st October 2026 at 11am.

John was kind, courteous and intelligent – a real gentleman. After retiring from the Civil Service, he and Pat joined the u3a and were keen members of the' Family History Group' run at the time by Ray Elliston.



Family History Group: (L to R) Ray Elliston with John and Pat Emerson 2018.

John and Pat were also keen gardeners and attended many of the talks and garden visits organised by the 'Gardens and Gardening Group' which was led at the time by Barry Liddle. The group travelled to events via a car sharing arrangement and John was still driving exceptionally well even as he entered his 90s! He will be sadly missed.



Barry Liddle and John Emerson at a Gardening Group visit to Houghall Horticultural College 2019.

Miscellaneous

Barry Liddle

Who am I?

I was born in Dagenham, Essex in 1943.
I won 2 two caps for the full England men's team.
I am perhaps best remembered as a football manager.
Having managed abroad, my nickname became El Tel.
I managed England at Euro 96.

Answer on page 16

My First 45 rpm Single.

My mono record player arrived at Christmas in the mid-1960s and the first 45 rpm single I bought was called *'Let's Go to San Francisco'* by a British band called *The Flower Pot Men*. Obviously, a record of its time, the A-side was *'Let's go to San Francisco' (Part1)* and lacking a second song the B -side was *'Let's go to San Francisco' (Part 2)*! The record was no more than a British 'tribute' to the USA west coast sound pioneered in the so-called 'Summer of Love' – but for a 12-year-old boy from British West Hartlepool, it was a cool record to own.

My Store Cupboard Pizza

Makes a meal for one or a starter for two.

Ingredients

Pack of round pitta breads; Tomato puree or small jar of pasta sauce; Mozzarella or grated cheddar; Sweet Bell Pepper; Olives; Olive Oil.

Method

1. Place one pizza under the grill or in a toaster until lightly toasted
2. Cut in half (creating 2 circular discs) and place toasted side down on an oven tray.
3. Cover the untoasted sides right to the edge with the tomato puree or sauce
4. Sprinkle on cheese
5. Top with diced pepper and olives.
6. Sprinkle with olive oil
7. Put tray in pre-heated moderate oven gas mark 6 for about 15 minutes or until the cheese is nicely melted.

Top -tip. (1)I buy a pack of small multi-coloured sweet bell peppers and freeze them. One pepper is the right amount and can be diced direct from the freezer. (2) you can substitute sliced tomatoes or pepperoni for the peppers. Bon Appetit!

1. Cornet. 2. Flute. 3. Triangle. 4. Piano. 5. Tuba.6. Organ. 7. Drum. 8. Lute. 9. Harp. 10. Castanet.

Quiz Answers from Page 6

Q1 The first soldier killed on British soil in WWI, died on duty in:

a) Hartlepool
b) Scarborough
c) Whitby

Q2 Who was the King at the time of the Great Fire of London in 1666?

a) Charles I
b) Charles II
c) Charles III

Q3 The great poet William Wordsworth relied heavily upon the support of his sister. What was her name?

a) Dorothy
b) Jane
c) Mary

Q4 What is the name of the steam engine that hauled the first passenger train on a public railway in 1825?

a) Locomotion No 1
b) Penydarren Locomotive
c) Stephenson's Rocket

Q5 Which English King was found buried in a Leicester Council car park in 2012?

a) Edward V
b) Richard I
c) Richard III

Q6 Which English City was known as the 'City of a Thousand Trades' because of its massive and diverse manufacturing economy during the Industrial Revolution'

a) Birmingham
b) Manchester
c) London

Q7 Which British Prime Minister said: *"A week is a long time in Politics"?*

a) Harold MacMillan
b) Harold Wilson
c) Margaret Thatcher

Q8 Who was the Bishop of Durham during the 1984-85 Miner's Strike?

a) John Habgood

b) David Jenkins

c) Ian Ramsey

Q9 The historical film 'Chariots of Fire' focused on the real story of two British Olympic athletes, Eric Liddell and Harold Abrahams. Who won an academy award for writing the screenplay?

a) Hugh Hudson

b) David Puttnam

c) Colin Welland

Q10 Who founded the British Army's Special Air Service (SAS) in 1941?

a) Jock Lewes

b) Paddy Mayne

c) David Sterling

Q11 The British Peerage has five ranks. Which is the lowest in the pecking order?

a) Baron

b) Duke

c) Earl

d) Marquess

e) Viscount

Q12 Which one of Henry VIII's wives on this list was not beheaded?

a) Anne Boleyn

b) Catherine Howard

c) Jane Seymour

Q13 Smoking in public places in England was banned during the office of which Prime Minister?

a) Tony Blair

b) Gordon Brown

c) John Major

Q14 According to Shakespeare, who said "A horse, a horse, my kingdom for a horse?"

a) Henry IV

b) Henry V

c) Richard III

Q15 Who captained the England Cricket team in the' Bodyline' Ashes series against Australia in 1932/33?

a) Gubby Allen
b) Wally Hammond
c) Douglas Jardine

Q16 What is the name of the woman who said" *If I were married to you, I'd put poison in your coffee,"* and Winson Churchill replied, "*If I were married to you, I'd drink it!"*

a) Lady Astor
b) Lady Colefax
c) Lady Diana Cooper

Q17 Prince Charles married Lady Diana Spencer in 1981 at:

a) St, George's Chapel, Windsor Castle
b) St. Paul's Cathedral
c) Westminster Abbey

Q18 Who said: "When a man is tired of London, he is tired of life."

a) Charles Dickens
b) Benjemin Disraeli
c) Samuel Johnson

Q19 What was the name of the largest naval battle in WWI and the only to involve a full-scale clash of battleships?

a) Battle of Cape Matapan
b) Battle of Jutland
c) The Wadden Sea Battle

Q20 Who was the British historian embarrassed by authenticating the fake Hitler Diaries in 1983?

a) Eric Hobsbawm
b) A J P Taylor
c) Hugh Trevor-Roper

Answers on page 16

Directory

Committee Members for 2026/27

Chair, Speaker Finder & Web Admin.
Roger Say
Vice Chair & **Business Secretary**
Paul Eustace
Treasurer –
Cliff Cordiner
Membership Secretary –
Pauline Williamson
Beacon Administrator.
Jan Jenner
Groups' Co-ordinator
Helen Eustace.
Minutes Secretary
Paul Eustace
Committee –
Andrea Reid

Roles of Non- Committee Members

Newsletter Editor-
Barry Liddle

Interest Group Leaders

Archaeology/History Group: Chris McLoughlin.
Art Appreciation: Co-Leaders: Irene Archer, Andrea Reid.
Backgammon Group Ann Gardiner
Bridge: Phil Jefferies.
Chess Group: Roger Say.
Coffee & Chat Jacky Armstrong
Creative Writing Group: Roger Say.
Events: see notice board
Excursions (New) Co-Leaders: Andrea Reid & Helen Eustace
Family History: Co- Leaders: Jacky Armstrong, Pat Rutter.
Fun with Fabrics: Ann Say (Currently inactive)
Gardens and Gardening: Co-Leaders: Liz Milbourn and Helen Eustace
Genealogy: Peter Stoker (New)
Lawn Bowls: Ray Elliston.
Natural History Group: Co- Leaders: Irene Archer, Margaret Andrews and Beryl Turnbull.
Photography Group: Jan Jenner (Currently inactive)
Play Reading: Carol Currie
Poetry: Margaret Chappell
Quiz Team: John Campbell.
Reading Group: Andrea Reid
Shibashi Exercise Group: Marjorie Reynolds.
Strollers (Formerly Stroll and Chat): Helen Eustace
Techy Group: Jan Jenner (Formerly IT Group)
Think and Drink: Maggie Hendry (New)
Tuesday Book Club: Mary Waldmeyer
Walking Group: Keith Alder

British History QuizQuiz: Answers

Q1 a) Hartlepool; **Q2** b) Charles II; **Q3** a) Dorothy; **Q4** a) Locomotion No 1; **Q5** c) Richard III; **Q6** a) Birmingham; **Q7** b) Harold Wilson; **Q8** b) David Jenkins; **Q9** c) Colin Welland; **Q10** c) David Sterling ; **Q11** a) Baron; **Q12** c) Jane Seymour; **Q13** a) Tony Blair; **Q14** c) Richard III; c) Douglas Jardine; **Q16** a) Lady Astor; **Q17** b) St. Paul's Cathedral; **Q18** c) Samuel Johnson; **Q19** b) Battle of Jutland; **Q20** c) Hugh Trevor-Roper.

Who am I Quiz – Answer: Terry Venables

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 November 2026.
Barry Liddle, Newsletter Editor