

The Events Committee

We live in very uncertain times again but the Events Committee have been meeting and planning visits for you in 2022.

Quiz and Cream Tea Thursday 10th February 2pm at the Parish Rooms. £5 Please book a place with Norma (and she will confirm your place) or at the next monthly meeting.

Ford Park Cemetery Wednesday 9th March and Tuesday 22th March at 11am. £3 Meet at the cemetery. Maximum number 12 each visit. Book your place with Janet or at the meetings.

Exeter Canal – Exeter to Exmouth Tuesday 24th May Cost TBA Leave Tavistock Bedford Hotel at 9am. Contact Shirley to book your place (or at a meeting).

We have discussed lots of options and are hoping to offer visits to

Tavistock Guildhall – a guided tour - this was already booked for January but now postponed until later in the year.

Trelissick Gardens and Falmouth

Sidmouth by boat

Royal William Yard

TR2

And many others! Obviously in view of the uncertain situation the bookings will be provisional but we will contact you through the u3a website as necessary.

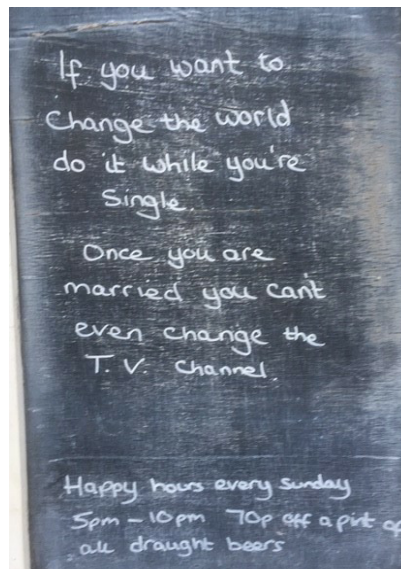
And finally

A couple of signs seen by John Noblet in Cornwall.

Make your own mind up!

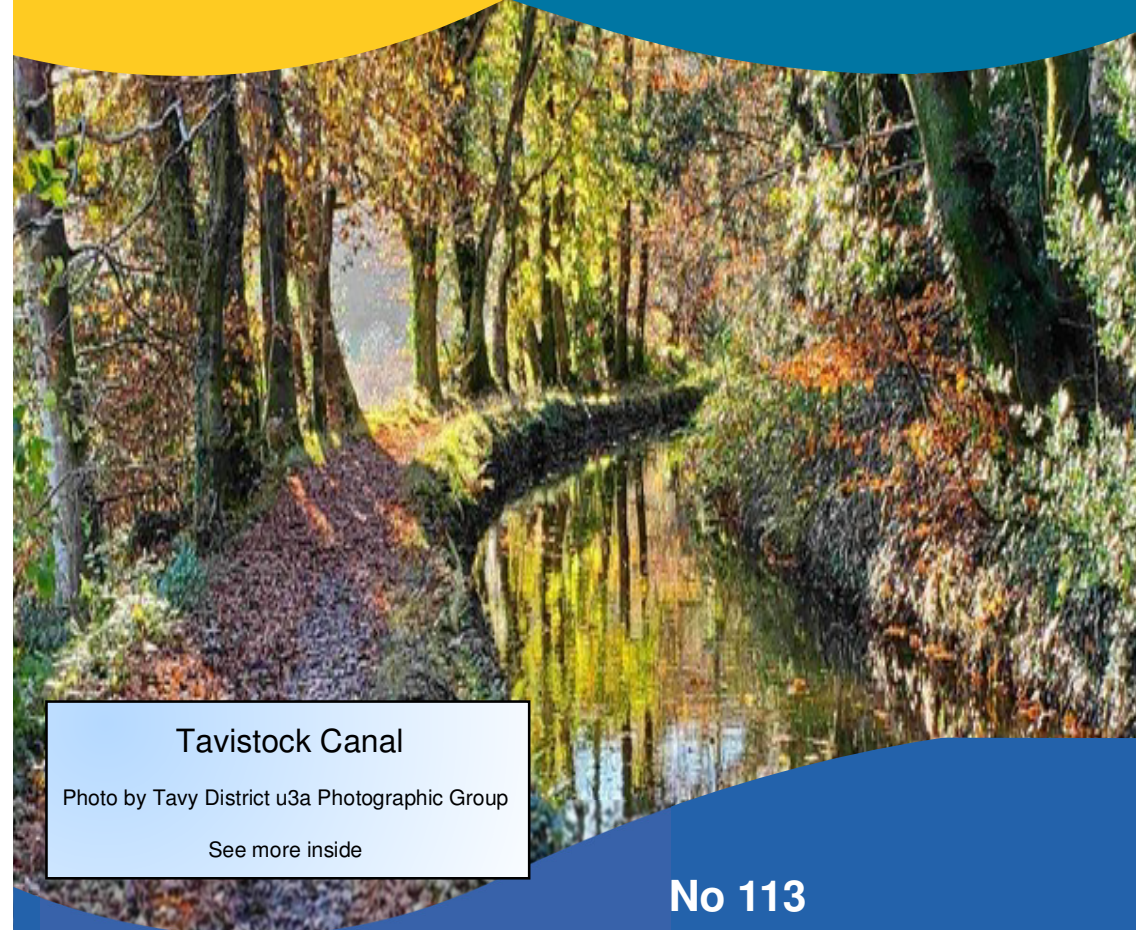


Surely you would be arrested?



Tavy District u3a

THE NEWSLETTER



Tavistock Canal

Photo by Tavy District u3a Photographic Group

See more inside

No 113

January 2022

u3a

Who's Who in Tavy District U3A

Chair	Robin Neave	854766
Business Secretary		
Treasurer	Angela Pitt	
Membership	Tony Rose	
Groups Liaison	Pippa Gardner	
Newsletter Distribution	Susan Neal	
Speaker's Liaison	Jane Ward	
Two Moors Liaison	Robin Neave	
Equipment Officer		

Events Committee

Norma Woodcock

Chris Webb

Diana Smirles

Janet Hunt

Shirley Smith

Remember:

Contact details of all Group Leaders and Committee members can be found in the password protected area of the website

Webmaster: Jan Draper

web@tavydistrictu3a.org.uk

Newsletter Editor: John Noblet

The deadline for the next Newsletter is 20th February 2022

Send contributions to johnnoblet@tavydistrictu3a.org.uk

Theatre Group - Planning for the Future

The only certain thing in these uncertain times is that you cannot plan anything. My cautiously optimistic plan for Theatre Group was to get things started again in January, looking to book shows at the Theatre Royal from early summer onwards. This was only last month when we thought we could have a proper Christmas this year and perhaps some live u3a meetings in the Spring, where we could sign up to see shows in Plymouth - boosted, with our trusty masks, if necessary.

Back in July I booked to take my grandchildren to see Cirque du Soleil perform at the Albert Hall this January as a Christmas present, thinking this was not overly optimistic. I haven't heard whether they will still be performing, but given that most major London shows are currently closed because of covid and the size of the Cirque cast, it certainly could be under threat now. So as we wait to hear what the new restrictions will be over Christmas, we will still have to wait and see.

Perhaps during this enforced hiatus members of theatre group would be kind

enough to let me know what sort of shows you want to see, when it becomes possible again. Personally I have been a bit disappointed with the lack of plays that the Theatre Royal has been offering over the past couple of years. It seems as if they host mainly musicals and repeats. I love a good musical - though I would rather have my toenails removed than see Mamma Mia - but that is just me. I have also been thinking that Sterts, as an outside space, may come into its own as a venue for us this Spring and Summer. Please let me have your views.

I am hoping that all this might change again rapidly and we can make some bookings in late January and February for later in the year; I have flagged up Fisherman's Friends, The Musical, as opposed to the cough sweet, as one that we could book. It starts on 1st September, ten months away, surely

Carole Thompson

Play Reading Group One

We have for a few months managed to meet on Wednesday mornings in my house, windows open and spaced out. We meet in two groups so we can maintain the distance. Which means I read the play twice!

I must admit we do spend a long time chatting. Coffee break is longer but I think that is important.

I hope we might be able to meet as a whole group again sometime soon. We are mainly the same group that started all those years ago when our u3a started.

I am happy to help anyone who wants to start a group. The play sets library in Exeter are very helpful.

Caroline Lorenzi

The Box

I am sure many of you will have taken the time to visit Plymouth's new museum, art gallery and archive. We went in small groups from our u3a to see this amazing newly developed space and around two million items – not that you can see them all at one visit! Entry is free so you can take your time to read and absorb the permanent exhibitions, have a coffee when worn out and go again another day!

The original building was closed in September 2016 for major redevelopment. Some of us donned hard hats, protective gloves and boots to visit the site as it was being built, seeing the archive foundations as they were laid and the tearing apart of St Luke's Church to make another light and bright exhibition space.

The finished museum is a truly amazing space! The atrium is quite splendid with a flying flotilla of 14 Naval figureheads above the entrance. There are eight galleries,

seven exhibition spaces and six national collections with an eclectic range of artefacts from all over the world. It is a real community hub with lots of child centred activities being offered regularly.

There are also special exhibitions where a fee has to be paid. Songlines: Tracking the Seven Sisters has been on since October and finishes on 27th February 2020.

I think we are very lucky to have such a facility so near at hand and I plan to go back and reacquaint myself with the Woolly Mammoth in the New Year!

Janet Hunt



The Walking Group in festive spirit at Calstock Quay just before Christmas. Even Santa came along!



FROM THE CHAIR

The 'Good' Old Days?

At times like this, when life is uncertain and forward planning is difficult, we are often tempted to look back at the past with rose-tinted spectacles. Life was better then, wasn't it? The sun always seemed to shine and everything was so much simpler? Or was it?

I spent a certain part of November looking back and reliving some aspects of my past life. On Remembrance Sunday, I was honoured to be marching with hundreds of other veterans at the Cenotaph in London. It was a truly memorable day from the journey in the 'Poppy' taxis (I had no idea that such a thing existed!) to the actual march past and subsequent get-togethers afterwards – a chance to meet old comrades and make some new friends. It felt most odd to be marching but not be in uniform – my younger self didn't particularly like parades and all the standing to attention, being inspected etc; she would have laughed at the notion that I actually volunteered for this!

The following weekend, I was also wallowing in nostalgia (and a certain amount of gin!) as I attended a Royal Naval Air Traffic Controllers' Reunion in Portsmouth. On entering the bar, I was surprised to see so many old men! And then I realised that I too had aged somewhat in the 30 odd years since I had seen most of them! It was both interesting and entertaining to discover what everyone had achieved and done since we last worked together.

But then I was catapulted into the present as I attended my youngest daughter's graduation at Twickenham. She qualified as a nurse during the pandemic, working either on a busy surgical ward or Covid wards. I was so proud of her for just getting on with life and achieving so much despite the difficulties.

And that's the thing, isn't it? Whilst it is lovely to look back, hopefully with fondness and pride at our past achievements and experiences, life is for the living. No matter what your circumstances, we only get one life so we need to make the most of it. I would like to say that I have no regrets looking back – I've certainly made some epic mistakes but they, like my successes, have made me the person that I am today. Even if Covid is preventing us from doing certain things, it should not stop us from living. Hopefully, we can emerge from this experience, older, wiser, and better people (or at the very least, grateful for what we do have...)

Hopefully, Tavy District u3a is one of the things that you do value and appreciate. If that is the case, would you consider (if you don't already) volunteering to join the committee? We desperately need a Business Secretary, a Groups Co-ordinator and an Equipment Rep. None of these roles is too strenuous or exacting and anyone coming forward would receive full training and support. Contact any of the committee members for information. Remember, no committee, no u3a!

Here's to a Happy, Peaceful and Covid-free New Year.

Robin Neave



Speaker Programme 2022 Part 1

Below is the programme for the first three months of 2022. In these continuing uncertain times – hence the Zoom only meeting in January – the programme is subject to change but the committee very much hope that it will be possible for it to go ahead as planned but please check the website and/or e-mail updates before venturing out.

Before turning to the detail, here are a couple of general observations

1. At the time of writing, there is no reason, from the restrictions point of view, why those attending via Zoom cannot invite one or more others to attend with them. Some already do this but others might like to consider inviting someone who would otherwise not be able to attend the meeting at all.
2. Feedback from the November and December 2021 “hybrid” meetings suggests that some members may be put off by the requirement to register some days in advance to attend the Town Hall in person. The committee has discussed this and consider that advance registration and with it, the restriction on numbers in the Town Hall (60 plus committee) must remain for the time being. However, in order to provide greater flexibility, the deadline for registration will be changed to midday on the Monday before the meeting.

Wednesday 5th January 2022 at 2pm (Join from 1.30) – via Zoom only

A Grandmother's Legacy – my Great Aunt Constance

Jenny Mallin, Author "A Grandmother's Legacy"

Winner of Best in World Cookbook World Gourmand Cookbook Society

To quote Jenny:

“My great aunt Constance was a woman of high social status, a wife of a British official, born in 1898. [This] is her account of her life in Burma and the story of a civilian trek in 1942 involving thousands of people who had to face for the first time in their lives, an arduous hike across some of the world's most treacherous terrain, dealing with monsoon climatic rivers, jungles and steep mountain ranges and dangerous wildlife...”

Wednesday 2nd February 2022 2pm – at Tavistock Town Hall and via Zoom.
The meeting will start with a brief EGM details of which will be circulated separately.

Plymouth Shops

Alan Bricknell

Alan is retired and, amongst many other activities, is involved in Plymouth u3a as well as being leader of the Ford Park Cemetery Heritage Team.

Continued on next page

The Norfolk Expedition *Continued*

Our 26 travellers arrived in Tavistock on 20th September happy and weary but most important all well and knowing that our adventure of nearly 1000 miles had been quite an achievement.

FOOTNOTE:- In recognition of the above it has been suggested that some sort of acknowledgement of this successful expedition should be made and the following possibilities have been aired:-

1. In true u3a fashion a group could form to explore the possibilities of searching out tin on the moor so that a medal or some sort of plaque devised. OR:

2. Meghan Markle approached with the suggestion that when she does her next

“dish the dirt on the Royal Family” she include a mention about us, which would give her the opportunity to show she had a caring side to her personality. OR:

3. An approach is made to Boris Johnson to fit in an appreciation of our event on his next TV appearance. There would of course be the stipulation that he must comb his hair.

4. It was decided that a suitable recognition would be that each member of the expedition be given an extra biscuit at the next open meeting.

Linda Elliott

Walking Groups

Forthcoming walks are as below. **All are welcome but remember that you MUST book in advance with the leader beforehand by text or phone.** Bring a drink and a snack.

Tuesday 18th January

Meet 10.00 at parking area by Roborough Rock (SX 515672)

An easy (level!) stroll on Roborough Down with both Devonport and Plymouth leats and back on old tramway. 5 mls. Cafe afterwards if you want. Could extend to Long Ash if you feel energetic.

John

Thursday 27th January

Meet at 10.00 at the first car park on the left after the cattle grid below Leedon Tor (SX 561709) on the road from Yelverton to Princetown.

Walk along the old railway track, around King Tor, about 4 mls on good paths.

Optional lunch at Fox Tor Cafe, seats outside.

Chris/Jennie

Tuesday 15th February

Meet at 10.00 at Pork Hill car park (SX 531751).

Walk around Cox Tor to Stephens Grave, and back by Roos and Staple Tors. 5½ mls. Easy moorland. Can extend to Pew Tor if you feel energetic

John

Thursday 24th February

Meet at Pound Cross (SX 507689) at 10.00

Walk to the Garden House, lots of snowdrops. Easy walking on paths including the one through the Garden House. About 4 mls. Optional refreshments at Long Ash Cafe.

Chris/Jennie

The Norfolk Expedition

It was the morning of September 16th, a day we had waited for these last two years. Were we ready? Indeed we were. At last we could forget lockdowns, red, amber and green lights, watching Boris Johnson on TV every night, endless “experts” with endless advice. It was time for our expedition.

We left Tavistock at 7.15 am and we were prepared to face the enemy. Our party of 26 had their masks at the ready and all had had two vaccinations, nothing could stop us now. Of course we had the renowned leader of many previous expeditions, Norma Woodcock, who had planned for any eventuality that we should meet in the unknown territory we were about to discover.

The first planned stop was a visit to St Albans and the possibility of our first encounter with people not wearing masks. This city had been the battleground for the first of the Wars of the Roses, we felt safe here.

Our first British Saint, St Alban, was buried here and on his burial ground the amazing St Albans Cathedral stood, it houses the longest nave in Britain and a stunning collection of medieval wall paintings. The carvings created by those early masons were exceptionally good.

Day two we travelled to Norwich, England's best preserved medieval city. Much of the original Roman Wall was visible. The Cathedral had stood over 900 years and claimed to have the second tallest spire in England, Salisbury being the first. Our Blue Badge guide was excellent and explained so many interesting features of the twisting narrow streets.

The afternoon was spent on the Norfolk Broads where a young Horatio Nelson learned to sail and become the hero that we know. It was a delightful time cruising along in the peaceful atmosphere.

Day three we were in King's Lynn which was one England's most important medieval port towns. The Trinity Guildhall dated back to 1420 and had an impressive flint chequerboard-patterned front wall. The Guildhall of St George probably built in the 1430s and the largest surviving 15th century guildhall in England. Now used as a theatre and lays claim to be the oldest continuously run theatre in the country. It has evidence that Shakespeare performed there as other strolling players did in the past.

Alongside the river Ouse was a statue of Captain George Vancouver who commanded an expedition to charter the area of North America in 1791. A man of our own heart.

Our destination in the afternoon was the Sandringham Estate, 60 acres of garden and the country retreat of Her Majesty the Queen. The house was superb, each room beautifully set out and large windows to allow the sun to enter.

Day four we visited the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, modern sculpture, paintings and sculpture from the ancient world. One of the oldest from Mexico, from the Olmec people thought to be the first known inhabitants of that country.

It was noticeable the few coaches there were on the road, sometimes ours was the only one at some venues. We realised that we were a “first” in some places and when walking back to join our coach with the emblem on the front window “TAVY U3A” we felt rather proud and a few moist eyes were apparent.

Day five on our journey home we visited the National Trust's Felbrigg Hall, a 17th century country house. It was built on the site of a 12th century Augustine Priory and contained priceless art collection. A sumptuous house containing a real treasure trove.

Speaker Programme 2022 Part 1 *Continued*

Of his talk he says:

“Looking around the city centre in Plymouth today, many of the names above the shop entrances are well known national, or even, international businesses. But as recently as 50 years ago the majority of retail outlets in the centre of Plymouth were local shops and stores, founded by entrepreneurs who had been born and brought up in the West Country. This illustrated talk looks at the history of some of those shops, including Pophams, Dingles, Spooners and John Yeo, and the people behind them.”

Wednesday 2nd March 2022 – 2pm – at Tavistock Town Hall and via Zoom

AGM followed by

Glassblowing demonstration

Graham Reed, Master Glassblower

Graham has had a long and very varied career in glass since he first became fascinated by glass blowing at the age of 10. I will try to ensure that he tells us about this as well as actually demonstrating his skills!

Jane Ward
Speaker Secretary

u3a Christmas Tree

Viv, Jennifer and Barbara with the u3a Christmas tree after they had decorated it for the Christmas Tree Festival in the church.

All the stockings were made by the Craft groups.

Photo by Pam Morris



Tavy District u3a Annual General Meeting

NOTICE OF AGM

Notice is hereby given that the Nineteenth Annual General Meeting of the Tavy District u3a will be held as a Hybrid meeting (Town Hall and Zoom) on Wednesday, 2nd March 2022 at 2.00 pm.
The Committee reserve the right to change this to a Zoom only meeting if deemed necessary.

Any member wishing to submit a formal motion to be tabled at the meeting should do so in writing or e-mail to the secretary, Robin Neave by Monday 14th February 2022

Robin Neave - Secretary

TAVY DISTRICT u3a (Registered Charity No. 1159196)
Nineteenth Annual General Meeting to be held as a Hybrid meeting (Town Hall and Zoom) on Wednesday 2nd March 2022 at 2.00 p.m.

AGENDA

1. Quorum and Apologies for Absence
2. Minutes of the Last Meeting (2021)
3. Report of the Trustees
4. Treasurer's Report and Adoption of the Accounts for the Year to 31st December 2021 (Subscriptions for 2023)
5. Appointment of the External Examiner for the Accounts of 2022
6. Election of New Executive Committee Members
7. Retirement of Executive Committee Members and Vote of Thanks
8. Formal Motions Previously Submitted.
9. Date of Next AGM – 1st March 2023

The deadline for the next Newsletter is 20th February
Please send to johnnoble@tavydistrictu3a.org.uk

'Captain' William Clemo of Devon Great Consols

St Paul's Church Gulworthy is known as 'The Miner's Church' and was built in 1856 by Francis, the 7th Duke of Bedford, to serve the large number of people working in the local mines.

Just inside the gate of the churchyard stand four headstones in a row, dedicated to 'Captain' William Clemo of Devon Great Consols, his wife Anna Maria, their sons James, Francis and William Henry, their daughter Elizabeth Jane and her husband Joseph Clemo (Elizabeth Jane married her cousin) and 'Captain' William's nephew also named William Clemo. There are other graves within the churchyard in respect of later Clemo descendants of William and Anna Maria.



William's parents, James and Elizabeth Clemo were married in Tavistock in 1807 and James was always described as a miner in any marriage or baptism registers. In the mid 1820's the couple with their family moved to Ridgway, a hamlet in the parish of Plympton St Mary where James died in 1829 aged 46. Having given birth to 7 sons and 1 daughter, by 1835 Elizabeth finds herself with only 4 sons still alive: John aged 27 now a married man, William, Francis and Joseph aged 13, 11 and 8 respectively.

In 1844 the Duke of Bedford was persuaded by a Tavistock mining engineer Josiah Hitchens to grant a lease for a piece of mining ground afterwards known as Devon Great Consols and commenced operations at some old workings. It is recorded that in the following year he engaged three miners, brothers, from the district of Ivybridge, John, William and Francis

Clemo and at a later date Joseph. William is recorded as having been employed to work on the old Gards Shaft at the western end of the area. Before the end of the first shift and only 24 feet below the bottom of the previous working they struck copper ore. By the end of the shift they had discovered and brought to the surface £60 worth of copper ore. This first mine was named Wheal Maria after Josiah Hitchens' wife. Wheal being Cornish for 'mine'.

As the workings progressed east, Wheal Maria was followed by Wheal Fanny (Hitchens' daughter), Wheal Anna Maria (Duchess of Bedford), Wheal Josiah and Wheal Emma (mother of William Morris of wallpaper fame founded on profits of copper and arsenic). The five mines extended over a distance of 2 miles and at their most productive employed 1,300 people. The overall output from 1844 to 1902 was 736,229 tons of copper ore sold for £3,473,046 and 72,279 tons of refined arsenic for £625,062. A railway was constructed from the mines to Morwellham, a distance of five miles away, and the only limiting factor on output was transport to and storage at the quays there.

Abbotsfield House in Tavistock was built for Thomas Morris, resident Director of Mines, and Tamar View (now the Horn of Plenty) was built for the Duke of Bedford's Mine Captain James Richards and was later lived in by Moses Bawden, Chief Local Officer for the mines.

William Clemo in the early days became Mine 'Captain' and in 1891 was appointed Manager and kept that position up to the time of his death aged 78 on 3 September 1900 after being in service at the mines for over 55 years. Of the brothers who came with him in 1845 one served 50 years and the other 55 years, both of them in responsible positions as 'Mine Agents'.

Val Blair

Recorder Group

The last report about our group was January 2021 and I am now pleased to report that the Recorder Group has been able to make good progress in getting back to playing together as a full group. We started the year meeting in groups of no more than six players, taking it in turns to attend a rehearsal.

Our leader, Randall Williams, was able to source some music for the smaller groups and we managed to get back into ensemble playing. As restrictions were relaxed and with the spacious accommodation offered by the library, we were able to return to full rehearsals, keeping the seats two metres apart. Our thanks go to the librarians for their support and encouragement. It has been wonderful to get back to making music together.

We were delighted to welcome seven new members this year and they have settled in very well. We have been able to add instrumentalists to all four sections of the group, making us seventeen in all. This has allowed us to tackle some exciting pieces written for two 'choirs' of recorders. One of the great things about our group is the fantastic library of music that has been collated over the years. We enjoy playing music from the Renaissance period right up to the present day.

This Christmas a small group, of five players, was able to perform at the Christmas Tree Festival. The programme lasted half an hour and it filled the church with a very beautiful and atmospheric sound, just right for enjoying the festively decorated Christmas trees. We hope that the whole group will be able to enjoy taking part next Christmas.

We are a friendly group that welcomes new members, so please get in touch with Randall Williams if you are interested in finding out more.

We meet in the library on the second and fourth Wednesday of every month.

Christine Caple



Another Reminder Just in Case you need it!

Membership of Tavy District u3a is renewable from 1st January 2022. A number of people have already paid their subs for 2022 – thank you!

Details about what and how to pay are on the Tavy District u3a webpage (<https://www.tavydistrictu3a.org.uk/membership/>) and were sent out to all members via email or post in November. (If we have your email address and you didn't receive it, please look in your Spam / Trash box – we may be lurking there!)

The Role of Groups Coordinator

At the March 2022 monthly u3a meeting and AGM my role as groups' coordinator comes to an end, after three years in position.

We will need someone to carry on this important role because the groups are the lifeblood of the u3a movement thus this is a key position.

Within the Tavy District u3a our groups are thriving despite the trials posed during the last two years. We lost some groups during these difficult times which is not surprising; and I would like to thank the group leaders for their commitment over the years.

I have been impressed by the determination and inventiveness of our current group leaders who have continued to serve their members throughout three lockdowns and despite various restrictions have managed to keep things going.

The role of groups' coordinator has changed and is now much reduced. It is a really good time for whomever takes it on as they have the space to develop the role and to make it their own; but essentially it is about keeping in touch with group leaders and ensuring any changes made to the groups are communicated to Jan Draper who is responsible for the u3a website.

The website has become the principal means through which members can learn about the wide range of groups and can then make contact with the groups coordinator in order to be linked with a particular group.

In due course we need someone in this role able to encourage the creation of new groups, support existing groups and keep information up to date as well as being an active member of the committee.

If you think the role would be of interest please contact me to discuss it further.

Pippa Gardner

Annual Subscriptions

Your annual subscription is due on 1st January.

Have you paid?

Full details of the amount due and how to pay were circulated in November and are on the Membership page of the website.

Covid

Please keep an eye on the national u3a website at u3a.org.uk to keep up to date with the latest guidance and how it affects u3a groups

Poetry 2

In the last year we have continued to meet regularly, sometimes in person after lockdown ended on July 19th but mostly on zoom including in recent weeks as PCR tests, either actual or looming have featured.

Again we've covered a range of themes, some more cheerful than others. We devoted one session to "Nature in a Time of Change" which left us feeling very despondent (unsurprisingly!) though we did encounter some magnificent poems including this one by Margaret Atwood (most of you will have heard of her through The Handmaid's Tale but she writes poetry too).

The Moment Margaret Atwood

The moment when, after many years
of hard work and a long voyage
you stand in the centre of your room,
house, half-acre, square mile, island, country,
knowing at last how you got there,
and say, *I own this*,

is the same moment when the trees unloose
their soft arms from around you,
the birds take back their language,
the cliffs fissure and collapse,
the air moves back from you like a wave
and you can't breathe.

*No, they whisper. You own nothing.
You were a visitor, time after time
climbing the hill, planting the flag, proclaiming.
We never belonged to you.
You never found us.
It was always the other way round.*

Other themes included "Sounds", "Art" and, most recently, "Uplifting" (at which point we realised we didn't see a great deal to uplift us at the moment!)

However one poem (on the next page), which many of you will be familiar with, did lift our spirits.

Christmas Gifts

In the early years of my married/family life in sunny Devon and realising that heavy handed hints to my husband as to what I 'would like for Christmas' had failed miserably, I pursued a different tack.

I left open copies of the Argos catalogue around the house; on top of the loo cistern, in his sock drawer, in the car, and even the man room where the oft used chisels were. Each page highlighted what would be appreciated gifts.

To this day I can never quite work out which page of the Argos catalogue elicited the received gift of the guide 'How to Improve your Brass Rubbing Technique'...

Margaret Garton

Opera Appreciation Group

The Group gradually started up again in late summer with the lively Glyndebourne production of the Coronation of Poppea

We finally all got together as a complete group in October.

A general feeling, given the times, was that nobody would want to watch an Opera where the heroine died in a sea of blood, of consumption looking a hefty 15 stone, whilst achieving high Cs in the process; or the even sadder heroine throwing her illegitimate child in the river closely followed by herself.

So Donizetti's Don Pasquale well came to the fore. A lighthearted colourful comic bel canto production with Anna Netrebko as the heroine who comes out the winner – very unusual, as in most operas they usually get killed off.



At our December meeting, and with non-alcohol mulled wine, home made gf mince pies (we know how to live in this group) we viewed a rollicking, comic, and at times manic, production by the New York Shakespeare Company of the Pirates of Penzance starring Kevin Klein as the award winning Pirate King.

Some 40 years old, and on the cusp of copyright release from the originators, it broke the mould of

hitherto stilted G&S productions – although 'twas challenging to hear the Chief of Police (Tarantara, tarantara) enunciating in twanging Brooklyn tones. We all loved it.

As a 'group leader' it's a real pleasure to share and develop a personal interest with others – especially at times the pithy comments. Maybe in the Spring, and in addition to our DVDs we'll be able to venture forth, with cat like tread, to the returning live cinematic performances.

Margaret Garton

**The deadline for the next Newsletter is 20th
February
Please send to johnnoble@tavydistrictu3a.org.uk**

Names

I have often thought about the names we give to people, to our children and that we have been given.

My granny was named Isabel. She married a man called Edward Bell so she became Isabel Bell. Always a joke. Ding dong!

My surname was Findlay. It did not fit. I was not Scottish and my father had left.

When I was at school my two best friends (they are still good friends after 72 years) were both called Helen. I really wanted to change my name.

When I went to college my friends said Caroline was far too posh. I became Carrie.

I often say I married my husband for his name. Lorenzi was much better. But I do have to frequently explain that he was not Italian but Austrian.

My children are called Alice and Peter. Short simple names to go with their foreign one. I don't think they really like them.

My son married a lovely girl called Pandora. My daughter married a man whose surname is Box. So that was really neat! They are both delightful and no trouble.

In USA I am called Granny by my dear grandchildren, but in Newcastle I am Grandma to my Geordie grandsons. I am not sure how that happened. I love both names. I wish I heard them more often.

I was wondering if people love their names or don't feel they fit them? Have they changed them? Why? Have they taken their husband's name or not changed as modern couples seem to have adopted? Double barrelled if indecisive or for the children?

It would be interesting to know.

I still feel sad I was not called Helen. Helen Lorenzi. No, too many L sounds.

Caroline Lorenzi

Editor's Note:

Now this could start something!

Looking through our membership list, I see we have members named after flowers, animals, birds of prey, occupations, trades, professions, drinks, nationalities, country pastimes, place names and even body parts!. You NAME it, we've got it!

Did you choose your name or did you just inherit it?

Has anybody else any views?

Poetry 2 *Continued*

Upon Westminster Bridge
William Wordsworth

Earth has not any thing to show more fair:
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty:
This City now doth, like a garment, wear
The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky;
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendour, valley, rock, or hill;
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!
The river glideth at his own sweet will:
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
And all that mighty heart is lying still!

Liz Johnson

A u3a Walk

Twenty-one people signed up for the walk led by Chris and Jennie on November 25th, and seventeen actually turned up. It was a beautiful bright day, though cold, and not too much in the way of wind. We met at the top of Pork Hill and set off in the direction of Pew Tor. We skirted its lower slopes, finding a pleasant sheltered spot to enjoy coffee.

Windy Post Cross, at seven feet tall, is one of the tallest such crosses on the moor, and, though younger than some, is probably about 500 years old. Not far from it is an 'inch hole' or 'bull's eye' drilled through the rectangular boulder which blocks the leat. This allows a fixed amount of water to be supplied to a farm.

The air continued to sparkle as we made our way towards Heckwood Tor and the large pieces of granite that had been cut and for some reason rejected. Continuing on past Vixen Tor, it seemed as though we could see for miles; the views were magnificent and the light was very clear.

We continued towards Merrivale for a little, then skirted around towards Barn Hill and our cars. About ten of us then made our way into Princetown and a very welcome lunch at the Fox Tor Café.

We only walked about three and a half miles, but all agreed it had been an excellent morning.

Felicity Luckman



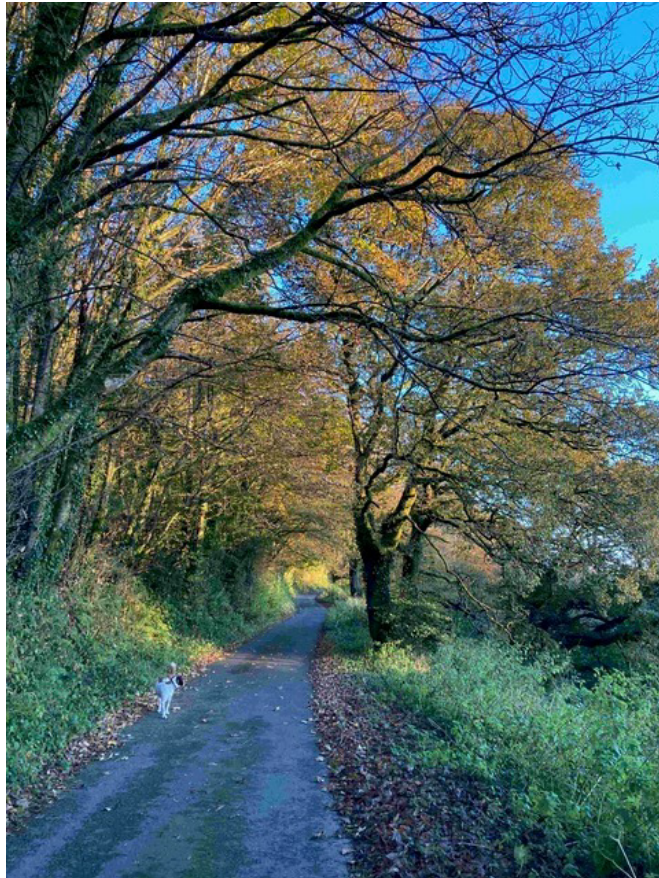
Digital Photography Group

The Digital Photography group are meeting both by Zoom and in person. Each month we have a monthly challenge to encourage users to explore the various features and capabilities of their cameras. The challenge for November was “Autumn in the Golden Hour”. The golden hour generally refers to a period just before sunset or just after sunrise when the sun is at a very low angle and it casts a golden light over outdoor scenes.

For this challenge it went beyond the capabilities of the camera and tested the members' ability to find a suitable day in a Tavistock November filled with early morning mists and afternoon rain. Nonetheless the group managed in some style and attached are four of the best images from the challenge. To my mind we conjured up the best reasons why we all love living in Tavistock.

Tony Rose

(Note: one photo is on this page, one on the next page, one is on the front cover and a fourth is in the centre of this Newsletter. All four are from anonymous members of the Photographic Group).



Why? *Continued*

Why did someone invent gas boilers that need electricity to switch them on? If you are unfortunate enough to have an electric oven as well, any power cut will leave you helpless.

Why in this uncertain world, has the government said that 'in future it will

reward farmers for protecting the environment instead of largely receiving payments to grow crops and rear livestock'? Isn't it possible to do both?

Why isn't *Fools and Horses* on a terrestrial TV channel?

Ivor Williams

The (Other) Discussion Group

Over the last few months, we have managed the occasional discussion meeting outdoors on the terrace of one of our members, with glorious views out over the world – lovely to meet up face-to-face in such a wonderful setting. We've had to resort to Zoom on occasions when the weather has been too unfriendly and although we're glad to have that as a fallback, we much prefer to meet up in person as long as we all feel safe. Fingers crossed.

Recently our discussion topics have included: 'What has happened to our sense of humour?' 'Social media', and 'Overpopulation!'

Our latest - 'Bah! Humbug! Christmas!' – was wide-ranging. 'Humbug' in this sense, has nothing to do with the minty sweet but with the old meaning used by Scrooge in A Christmas Carol. We graciously decided that Christmas should be allowed to continue as part of the annual calendar although we do have reservations. On the plus side, there is, of course, the religious significance and the solace that that brings to a number of people, the opportunity to be with people who are important to us, and we felt that having a celebration of light and warmth in the middle of dark and cold winter is important to people's mental well being.

However, the downsides of Christmas are clear and disturbing: the overproduction of plastic tat is clearly of no benefit to the environment; many people experience high levels of stress because of expectations regarding presents and food; the number of incidents of domestic violence in the UK rises considerably over Christmas ... the list is long. (Incidentally, economists argue over what it would mean to the economy if Christmas were deleted; some feel that the profit made by the retail industry in the run-up to Xmas would be spread out over the year, others suspect it would be minimised).

We felt that it would be good to have a midsummer festival of the same significance as Christmas but not with the downsides, of course (!) At a time when the weather is a little more friendly, a celebration concentrating on the opportunity of being with people we love would be very welcome. At the time of writing this, there is some doubt over whether Christmas celebrations will be allowed this year – perhaps a midsummer festival next year would go some way to lifting people's spirits?

For our next discussion, everyone is on the look out for good news, both personal, national and international..... watch this space!

Angela Pitt

Why?

Why does my Devon library card reference consist of one letter plus thirteen numbers – six of which are zeros? This is enough to identify a billion readers. There are surely not quite that many Devonians?

Why do I have to pour away 4 litres of cold water before I get any hot from the kitchen tap? How much precious clean water is wasted by all the millions of households with combi boilers?

Why isn't there a cookbook which uses only very basic ingredients but in lots of different ways? One recipe I saw in a weekend magazine said preparation time 5 minutes. But there was a main dish, a marinade and a sauce: 21 different ingredients, only five of which we had in the larder.

Why isn't everybody worried about geoengineering? Many scientists are thinking that emission levels are not likely to be reduced over the next five or ten years (see below). Projects are being devised to inject particles in the high atmosphere to reduce the sun's radiation intensity (as in an eruption), to increase the reflectiveness of clouds over the ocean, or to make the highest (cirrus) clouds thinner to let more of the earth's heat out. This is geoengineering, though some are calling it playing God with the atmosphere.

Why are men's shirt collars still designed to have a tie? Where are shirt designers working these days? Haven't they noticed?

Why, when you open the first page of one of the paperback classics of literature, are you straightaway put off by finding a 23 page preface? It will undoubtedly explain the story, so why read it first? But you feel somehow guilty if you go straight to chapter one.

Why does so much of TV have loud 'background' music, muttered and incomprehensible asides, and any factual programme (especially the science ones) mostly 'full of sound and fury, signifying nothing', as Macbeth said a long time ago.

Why are we being told to do our bit for global warming? The current attitude of countries like China, India and several others, means that emissions are forecast to go on rising over the next ten or so years. If the UK reduces its emissions by half, down to 0.5% of the world's total, what is the point if emissions from the rest of the world have risen by 10%?

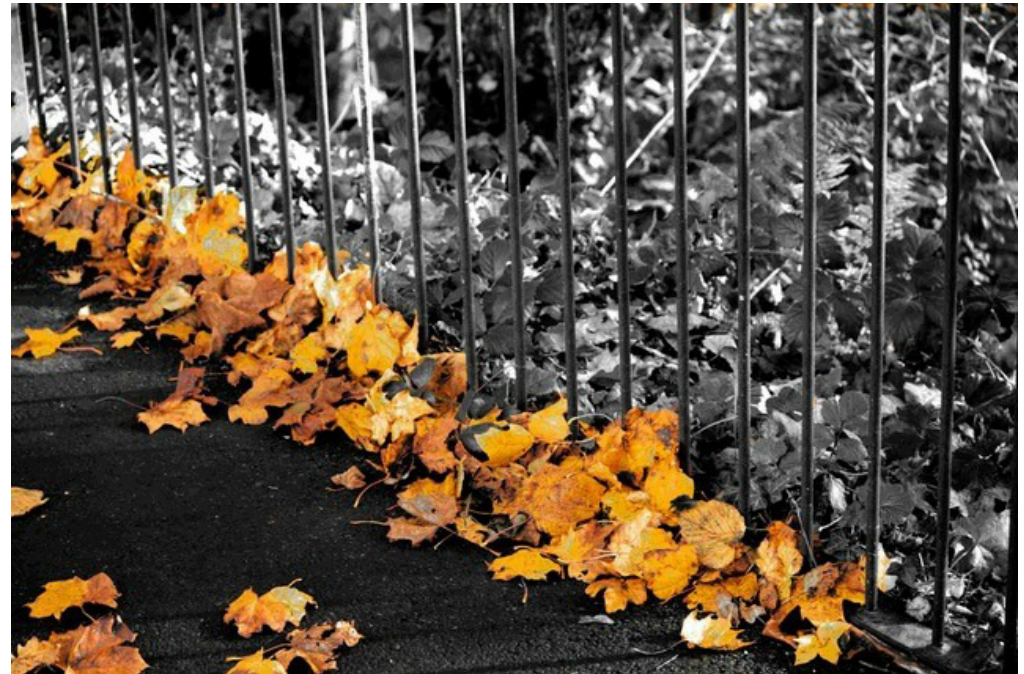
Why don't shops (and our market) have chairs any more? I remember that 80-odd years ago every shop had somewhere you could sit down. The same goes for events like, for instance, the Okehampton Show, where luckily there are always seats to watch the sheep-shearing but nowhere else. I'm old, like a lot of other people, and need to sit now and again.

Why are there so many pedestrian crossings in our town centre? Are they all really needed? I write as one who is thankful that we have them, but I could manage quite easily without at least one of them. Drivers would be grateful.

Why are weather forecasts for Tavistock so different? There are two main organisations forecasting our weather. The BBC uses MeteoGroup, now part of DTN, a company based in Minnesota. ITV still have faith in our UK Met Office. They both use numerical forecasting methods so why are their forecasts often different – even for the current day?

Why, when you order something from a web company, can't you do it without having to register and create an account with a password? They used to say you must never write your passwords down and never use the same one twice. Ha! I have five pages of them.

Digital Photography Group



New Painting and Drawing Group

Would you like to get your paintbrushes and pencils out and paint together as a group?

Following last month's note in the Newsletter about the new Painting and Drawing Group Sheila Naybour and Jane Perona-Wright met to discuss the formation of the group and share ideas.

We anticipate meeting twice a month, initially at Sheila or Jane's homes, but if our numbers grow we will find a suitable venue where we can draw and paint together. We discussed meeting on a Tuesday but this may change to suit the majority or a formal venue. There are so many advantages in painting together: we can learn from each other as well as enjoy the company. We will be Covid sensitive.

Please contact Sheila Naybour or Jane Perona-Wright to discuss and make the new group work. Our details can be accessed via the website.



