

Who's Who in Tavy District u3a

Chair	Andy Hutton
Vice Chair	
Secretary	Hannah Miatt
Treasurer	Gudrun Zeissler
Groups Coordinator	Linda Diggle
Newsletter Distribution	Caroline Lorenzi
Speaker Secretary	Isobel Davies
Two Moors Liaison	Andy Hutton
Equipment	Roger Plumb
Beacon Administrator	Susie Pitt

Events Committee

Norma Woodcock
Chris Webb
Janet Hunt
Shirley Smith
Sonja Armstrong

Theatre

Carole Thompson
Shona Dickenson

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

**Note the email
address for
Newsletter
contributions**

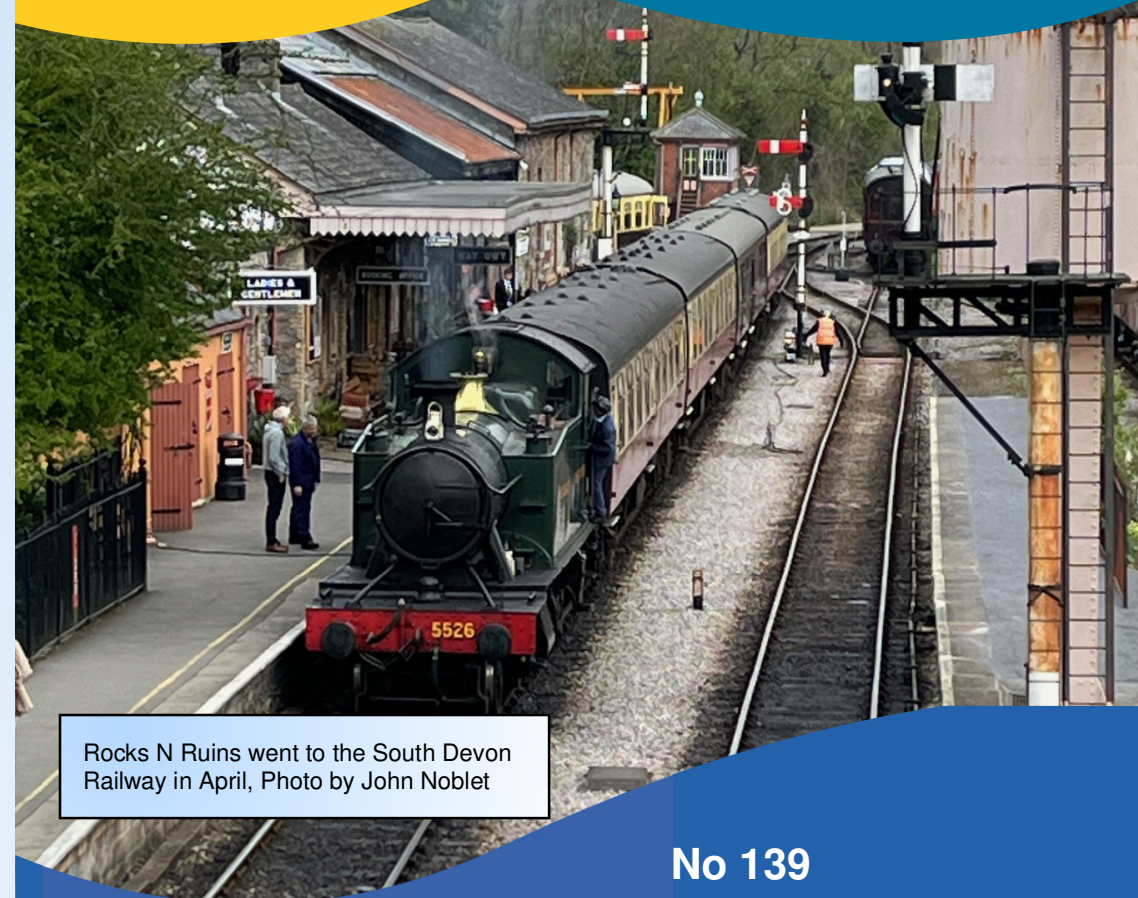
Newsletter Editor: John Noblet

The deadline for the next Newsletter is 20th June 2026

Send contributions to u3a@johnnoblet.co.uk

Tavy District u3a

THE NEWSLETTER



Rocks N Ruins went to the South Devon Railway in April, Photo by John Noblet

u3a

No 139

May 2026

FROM THE CHAIR

I'm writing this as the new Chair of Tavy District u3a and it is, in the main, a request for all our members to get involved with our group. This could be on the committee, going to the groups, leading the groups or being involved in any of the many other activities that are happening all the time. It could also involve giving me ideas about what I should write in the piece I have to submit to this newsletter several times a year! I'm dyslexic and writing/grammar does not come easily.

Recently I went to the group activities leaders' lunch which was a thank you from the committee to the leaders of all our groups. It really makes one realise how many groups we offer and also what variety is on offer.

I hope most of us, like me, have had an interesting and I hope mainly a fun life up to this point. The u3a surely is a lovely way of going forward and learning and trying new things and having new experiences. It should be grasped with both hands.

Writing this made me think of all the different activities I have tried up to now in my life, but it is clear looking through our lists of groups there are still things that I've never tried such as cribbage and play reading! It is a fascinating way to spend a bit of time just thinking about what things one has tried or learned in the past. Maybe it gives clues as to what you need to try next.

As a way of a biography and introducing myself, I was a general practitioner in the Pennines for 25 years before working locally on an occasional basis for a few years. I was a police surgeon during that time for 13 years as well as occasionally doing defence work in the criminal courts as an expert on assaults. When I was younger I sold eggs and mushrooms in Leeds market, delivered newspapers, was a Christmas postman and spent a couple of summers working in Butlins.

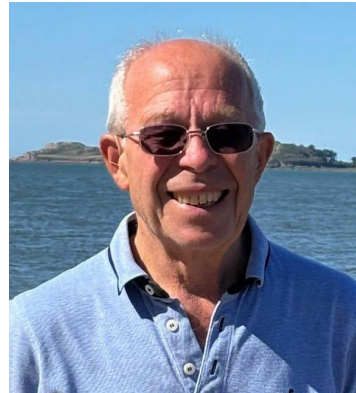
For the last 15 years I have lived in Tavistock with my wife, Sue, where as well as enjoying this most wonderful area I have been a magistrate, the town mayor a couple of times and of course, most importantly to me, a dad and grandad.

Over the years I have tried numerous hobbies, never getting very good at anything but thoroughly enjoying them. I can play a saxophone, sort of. Sail, sort of. Paint watercolours, hopelessly etc etc. I even tried Morris dancing before being kicked out for twirling too much! I'm saying all this not to boast but to show that anybody can try anything and that is what I want to encourage everyone to do.

Look at the groups that are on offer and see if there is anything you fancy. If there isn't anything you fancy, what about thinking of starting a group yourself. Our group coordinator, Linda Diggle, would be delighted to hear from you and would do everything she can to help you. What members often don't realise is that when they come suggesting a new idea about what could be a good new group is that maybe two or three other people have already suggested the same thing and Linda can then try and get you all to meet up, with help if need be and get you started.

Be brave, try something new.

Andy



Events

The planning for 2026 is now nearly complete and so we will release full details of each trip at the Wednesday u3a meeting as the booking sheets become available. Then we will email out the details to all u3a members that day.

Please note the Events account number is very similar to the main (subs) account. Please do use the correct one!

Thursday 4th June

Coach trip with a guided tour of Newlyn and its Artists plus Penzance

THIS TRIP IS NOW FULL AND THERE IS A RESERVE LIST. IF YOU FIND YOU CAN'T COME OR WANT TO GO ON THE RESERVE LIST PLEASE EMAIL JANET ON

Just for information:

Depart at 8.30 from the coach parking bays in the Bedford Coach Park. There will be a comfort stop at Kingsley Village (15 mins)

We will meet our guide just outside Newlyn and the coach will take us up to The Newlyn School of Art. There will be a 90 minute guided walking tour down through Newlyn, some steep hills down, and finish by the Newlyn Art Gallery in the centre of the village. Have lunch or a picnic in Newlyn and at 2pm board the coach to take us to Penzance, staying for one and a half hours.

Return at 5.30 (approx.)

Cost £23

Friday 31st July

Sidmouth Folk Festival

Depart 9.00 from Bedford Car Park Coach Park.

Free time in Sidmouth to watch or join in the dancing on the Esplanade and enjoy the town.

Depart Sidmouth 4.00

Price £19

Contact Sonja Armstrong when booking opens at the June u3a meeting

Exmouth Birding Cruise in November

Bookings will be taken later this year.

See previous page for
Events Payments details

Theatre News

With regret and after considerable thought and discussion Shona and I have decided that we will not continue to book theatre visits beyond the end of this year. We are sad that we have come to this point but group bookings with the Theatre Royal have become increasingly difficult over the last year or so.

You may have noticed that since Covid the length of time that we have to book and pay in advance of each show has increased to the extent that the majority now have to be booked a year or more in advance. This year, for example, we were invited to make group bookings for six shows at the beginning of March, only one of which was in 2026. Many members are understandably either not prepared or not able to commit themselves this far in advance and, if they do, often find they cannot attend a production nearer the time and have to try to sell their tickets at the last minute.

Added to this, increasing ticket prices make our £5 discount for groups of 10 less significant and the number of tickets we need to sell to obtain a complimentary seat has increased from 20 to 21! Also, for certain shows such as Moulin Rouge and Cats we are now restricted to the tier of ticket we may purchase. Overall, the Theatre's current group booking system no longer works well for our demographic!

This is a shame because Tavy District u3a has had a long association with the Theatre Royal and many of us have seen some wonderful productions in Plymouth over the years. I still believe it to be a great regional theatre which hosts many major plays, ballets and musicals making it possible to see top West End shows locally. However, I think now that it would be better for U3A members to make their own selections and make their own bookings to suit them.

We currently have two ballets that can still be booked, these are:

Birmingham Royal Ballet's The Maiden of Venice on Saturday 13th March **2027**. Tickets are £43.20 for seats in the Circle and payment has to be made by our next meeting in May.

Matthew Bourne's Cinderella on Thursday 19th November **2026**. Tickets are £58 for seats in the Circle and payment required by the July meeting.

Carole Thompson

Events Payments

u3a BACs account for Events is;

Tavy District U3A

Give the reference as the name of the event and your surname.

When you have paid by BACS you MUST email the visit organiser to confirm your payment.

The deadline for the next Newsletter is 20th June
Please send to u3a@johnnoble.co.uk

Speaker Programme

Our forthcoming speakers, all at Tavistock Town Hall on the first Wednesday of the month at 2.00pm and followed by tea and coffee

May 6th

Stephen Lay, Retired Cornish and Worldwide Mining Engineer, who trained at Camborne School of Mines, will talk about 'Mining, on the Dark Side'.

The talk describes the corrupt underworld of mining, with organised crime and political intrigue.

June 3rd

Jim Causley, Devon based British folk singer, songwriter and musician, will tell us about 'Devon and Sabine Baring Gould'

Sabine Baring Gould (1834-1924) was a resident of Lewtrenchard Manor, Anglican priest, teacher, artist, father of 15 children, collector of folk songs, and Dartmoor archaeologist.

July 1st

Terry Green, Tavistock businessman, inventor, and voice of 'cashier number 3', now Crime writer (Redline, and Dangerous Art), and member of the Crime Writers' Association, will talk about his career, his writing, and the challenges of self-publishing.

Our Newsletter

Tavy District u3a now has well over 500 members, the highest figure that it has ever been.

But the number of members contributing to our bi monthly Newsletter has not kept pace with this growth.

You are all welcome to submit an article, a photo or a snippet of information on any subject that you think may be of interest to members, not necessarily a u3a group activity.

So please think about something that you could include in the next edition.

Our Newsletter Editor, John Noblet will be more than pleased to hear from you.

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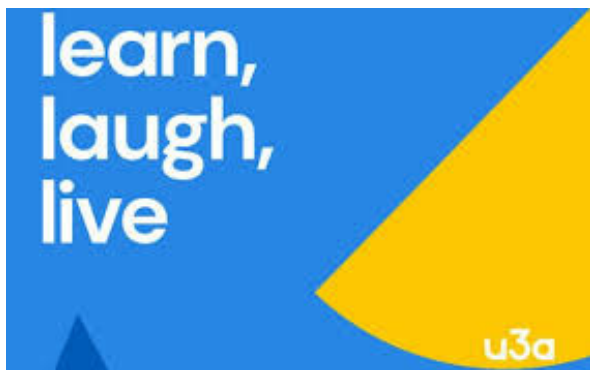


My learning about the u3a

With so many new members recently joining Tavy District u3a (our total membership was 524 at the last count), I've been asked several times, as a committee member, about the origins of the u3a. So, for those inclined to read on, here's what I've learnt.

The University of the Third Age – or u3a as we know it – began in France in the early 1970s. The original idea was quite formal, with universities providing lectures and courses for retired people who wanted to keep learning.

When the idea came to the UK in 1982, starting in Cambridge, it evolved into something rather special. Inspired by a simple but powerful belief — that people in their “third age” (no longer in full-time work or raising families) have a wealth of knowledge, skills and life experience to share — the UK u3a became a movement built on shared learning. In essence, members learn from each other, drawing on a lifetime of skills, interests and experience. That simple idea has proved remarkably successful. Today, supported by The Third Age Trust, there are over 1,000 u3as across the UK, bringing together more than 400,000 members.



u3as in the UK are self-funded; members are not working towards qualifications but learn purely for pleasure. The Third Age Trust offers resources, advice and opportunities for u3as to connect more widely, while still leaving each one independent and member led. No wonder each u3a, shaped by its own community, is slightly different — yet all share the same friendly, informal spirit.

Perhaps that's why our membership continues to grow...

I must admit I had never heard of the u3a until about five years ago, when a fellow gardener on our newly acquired allotment site mentioned they were a member and my interest was piqued. At the time, my husband and I knew hardly anyone locally, having recently retired from busy careers and relocated across the channel to Devon to be nearer our grandchildren.

I've since discovered what makes the u3a so special. It's not just about learning — it's about friendship, curiosity and a sense of purpose, while staying active in mind and body. It's a place to discover new interests, rediscover old ones, and enjoy being part of a local community. I've learnt that I get back as much as I'm prepared to put in — a valuable lesson indeed.

Linda Diggle, Groups Co-ordinator

Walking

Thursday 14th May

Mary Tavy Walk

Meet at Pixon Lane at 9.30 to car share to Mary Tavy.
This is a circular walk from Mary Tavy to Brent Tor returning via Wortha Mill Bridge.

About 5mls, a mix of paths, minor lanes and field paths with a climb up to Brent Tor church, weather permitting. There are no stiles. Bring coffee and a picnic.

This walk will be led by Val Blair.

Thursday 28th May

Bluebell Walk

Meet at Pixon Lane at 9.30 to car share to Bennett's Cross, just past the Warren House Inn.
This is a circular walk to see the fields of bluebells around the Headland Warren Farm.

A few ups and downs on moorland tracks, about 5mls.
Optional lunch at the Warren House Inn, bring coffee and a snack.

This walk will be led by Tony James and Hannah Miatt.

Thursday 25th June

Walkhampton/ Monastic Way Walk.

Meet at Pixon Lane at 9.30 to car share to Lowery Cross car park.
This is a circular walk to Walkhampton and Huckworthy Bridge via Walkhampton Church and along the disused Princetown railway track.

About 5mls, a mix of minor roads, field paths and a Green Lane known as 'Jimmie Pickles' Lane.

There are 3 stiles, one of which is a wall stile. Bring coffee and a picnic.

This walk is led by Val Blair,

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So What's Out There?

What do you hear when you walk out of your door? Probably traffic will be the first thing or a dog barking somewhere.

Well, take a minute to listen again and you may be surprised. We have lived all our lives with this sound. It's all around us and we may not have even noticed. Birds. Birds singing. Birds chirping. Birds giving a different sound – maybe an urgent warning call. They're everywhere, if we care to listen.

And are you just a little inquisitive to know what sort of bird it might be that you're hearing? In our gardens or parks we'll probably be hearing blackbirds, sparrows and robins throughout the year. And in the last few years, you may be seeing goldfinches on your feeders. They have learned to forsake the thistles in more rural hedges and opt for the sunflower seeds in our garden feeders. Easier.

But what's this? In Spring, we seem to be having more varied sounds. This, as many of you will be aware, is because migrants are coming to Britain. Landing right in our gardens and parks, up on the moors, along the coast. Locally, these can be birds like wheatear (up on the moors), cuckoo, warblers and finches.

In Spring, birds sing loudly. Why? Because they're advertising their prowess, looking for a mate, and then protecting their territory. Getting up early to listen to the dawn chorus at this time is just magical. And then we may just see one or both parents collecting food to feed their young – pulling hard to get a worm out of our lawns or pecking at the seeds in our feeders. It's a dangerous time soon after fledging, as they're learning to fly. It's always advised to try to keep your cat in at dawn and dusk when birds are at their most vulnerable. Yes, I know, other predators are around!

Of course, there are other birds we see on the shore or lakes and these are mainly waders and wildfowl. And the occasional raptor scanning from above! We are lucky to

have local places like Saltram, Topsham and various estuaries which often produce a fantastic variety of these birds. On the River Tavy at the moment you may see mallard ducks with over a dozen ducklings following on. Occasionally you will recognise a grey heron, standing silently... just watching. And then a dipper, which will be doing just that – dipping down into the water and swimming around a little. They're all looking for one thing - food.

In recent years, some of you will have seen the peregrine falcons which perch on the Catholic church on Callington Road. I've been fortunate in seeing the parents training one of their fledgling young to fly and scan for food. So remember to look up occasionally!

This is just a dip into what else we may see and hear around us, in our gardens, lakes, coastal walks etc. It's another world, and it's all around us.

Shirley Smith.



Thanks to Margaret Garton

What a Difference a Month Makes!

Two walks, two contrasting terrains, and two very different weather conditions, separated by just a month – the difference between Winters' grip and Springs' promise.

In February, the walking group - boosted with four new welcome members - set off from Princetown with Nun's Cross as our destination. By South Hessary Tor we felt the full force of the icy wind and driving rain. Those that were sensible enough already had their waterproof trousers on, the lucky couple of us that had them in their packs hopped about on one leg, then the other, to struggle into them before they blew away, and the rest of us resigned ourselves to the inevitability of a thorough soaking and boots full of tepid water!

Undeterred, we reached a very boggy Nun's Cross farm for a quick drink and snack in thick mist, before returning to the Fox Tor Cafe and some welcome lunch. The lack of views and the inclement weather had that consolidating effect that adverse conditions seem to have on a group; a brisk pace, and a sense of achievement and camaraderie.

In March – just four weeks later – we were parked in Calstock at the start of a day that grew in warmth and sunshine; ready for a walk along the Tamar river, an ascent through Danescombe woods and an amble around Cotehele to see the daffodils. The comfortable pace gave us time to chat, listen to the birds, spot Wood Anemones, and pause at Mispickel Cottage (named for its association with arsenic) to learn about the mining history of the area from Tony and Val.

This is one of my (many) favourite walks because of its variety, history and beautiful views. In my opinion it is the best way of arriving at Cotehele, and all the better for sharing it with good company.

Hannah Miatt



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Words to ponder by an anonymous author

When I turned 65, I sat in my favourite chair, looked back at my life, and whispered to myself, "So... this is the beginning of the final stretch."
And slowly, the truths I had avoided all my life began to surface.

Kids? They're busy writing their own story.
Health? Slips away faster than sand through open fingers.
The government? Just headlines, promises, and numbers that never change your daily reality.
Ageing doesn't hurt your body first — it hurts your illusions.
So I sat down with myself and carved out a handful of bitter but necessary truths.

Kids don't save you from loneliness
Children grow, life pulls them in every direction, and you become a memory they visit when time allows.
You smile... and yet something inside you remains strangely hollow.
Kids bring joy — but they are not a shield against loneliness.

Health is not forever
One day, the outings you once jumped into with enthusiasm feel like a marathon.
You realise health was never a background character — it was the main pillar holding your life steady.

Retirement and money
Retirement is not a reward — it's a reality check.
Depending on the system it's like standing on thin ice.
Bills grow, needs grow, prices grow... but support doesn't.

So I rebuilt my life on new rules — honest, sharp, practical rules for living with dignity.

Rule 1: Money is more reliable than anything else.
Love your kids, cherish them — but don't make them your retirement plan.
Save for yourself.
Even small savings create big freedom.
Financial independence is dignity.

Rule 2: Your health is your real job
Nothing else matters if your body refuses to cooperate.
Move. Walk. Stretch.
Guard your sleep like treasure.
Eat cleaner. Reduce the poison disguised as sugar and salt.
Illness doesn't discriminate, but it respects those who take responsibility for themselves.

Rule 3: Create your own joy
Waiting for others to make you happy is the fastest way to heartbreak.
So you learn to enjoy the small things — a peaceful breakfast, a good book, music that warms the soul.
When you know how to make yourself happy, loneliness loses its power.

Do You Want to Join Us?

Our Discussion group is on the 3rd Monday, two hours with coffee in the middle.

The discussion is normally led by a member who will usually do some research on the topic. A week or so before the meeting they will send out some information about the subject that they have discovered to give as a basis for discussion.

All members are then encouraged to do some of their own reading and think about the matter before we meet.

The meetings are usually lively as we have different views on many subjects. We however always treat each other with respect, and it is the different views that make the discussions very interesting. Members come from all sorts of different backgrounds.

We have 10 regular members of our group and meet in our members' houses.

We work out a month or two before who is to lead a particular meeting which gives time for some research. All members lead the group in turn.

We have found ten people at a meeting is a good number to encourage debate but is also small enough to house in somebody's lounge. We aim to be reasonably academic in our discussions

In the past six months we have had discussions on:

Is the judicial system fit for purpose and what changes are needed?

Foreign policy in the time of Trump.

How can we support/encourage the UK to take personal health management more seriously.

Should we have a tourist tax in Devon?

Why do men behave like they do?

At Christmas we discussed rituals and traditions.

Though the group is officially full at present we do have a guest list. We usually have a couple of apologies before every meeting from members who cannot attend and so we invite people on our guest list who would like to come and see how the group works and whether it is an activity they wish to participate in to join us. People who wish to show interest will not be on the guest list for ever as there is always movement in the group.

If you are interested contact me

Andy Hutton (present Group Chair)



Notice seen in a bookshop window.
Thanks to Liz Purcell whose brother saw this.

First 2026 Garden Group Visit

Jennie and Janet aim to support the NGS, National Garden Scheme, and St. Luke's Hospice charities in choosing the gardens we visit each year. We were at the first NGS opening of 2026 on Saturday, 21st February with our visit to Higher Cherubeer in mid-Devon.



So we thought, why not visit the Duke of York pub in nearby Iddesleigh first? All 22 of us thought the lunch there was brilliant and should you go - the fish pie is the best ever! It was such a pleasure to also have the opportunity to also walk over to the former village primary school, now a village hall, to explore and find the famous painting!

There it was ... a painting of Joey, the splendid red bay horse, allegedly painted by Captain James Nicholls in 1914 with the clock beneath always showing 10.01.

We reminded ourselves of the now classic children's novel written in 1982 by local Iddesleigh resident Michael Morpugo, of Joey, from a local farm who was sold to the army and his owner Albert's quest to find him.

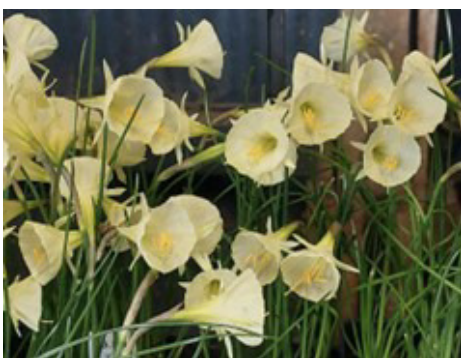
But...back to higher Cherubeer Farm!

The woodland garden has a gentle, fascinating appeal. We greatly enjoyed



admiring the National Collection of cyclamen species, hellebores and over 400 species of snowdrops. We now appreciate why this garden was featured recently in The English Garden magazine...it is charming!

Janet Hunt



Our favourite plant of the visit Narcissus bulbocodium "Arctic bells"

Words to ponder *continued*

Rule 4: Ageing is not an excuse to become helpless
Some people turn ageing into a performance of complaints.
And slowly, even those who love them start stepping away.
Strength is attractive. Resilience is magnetic.
People respect the ones who stay capable, not the ones who surrender.

Rule 5: Let go of the past
The good old days were beautiful — yes.
But they're gone, and there is no return ticket.
Clinging to the past steals the present.
Life today may look different, but it still holds moments worth living.

Rule 6: Protect your peace like it's your property
Not every argument needs your voice.
Not every insult needs your response.
Not every relative deserves access to your emotions.
Peace is expensive. Protect it from drama, negativity, and draining people — even if they're your close ones.

Rule 7: Keep learning something — anything
The day you stop learning is the day you start ageing.
A new recipe, a new word, a new app, a new hobby — your brain needs movement just like your body does.
Learning keeps you young.
Stagnation makes you old.

Strength and freedom still belong to you
Ageing is an exam no one can take for you.
You can adapt, rebuild, and rise stronger...or sit back, complain, and wait for someone to rescue you.

And if
No one comes to rescue you
Stand up for yourself ...
Because you still can.
And that single truth is enough to transform the rest of your life.

Thanks to **Linda Diggle** for sharing this. The author is unknown.

Daffynitions

Acorn:	An oak tree in a nutshell	Attack:	A small nail
Announce:	One sixteenth of a pound	Crowbar:	A bird's drinking bowl
Appear:	Where you can fish from	Illegal:	A sick bird

Thanks to **Anna Clarkson**

How Times Have Changed Over The Years

As a young woman in the 1960's it was a compliment to be wolf-whistled when you walked past a building site. If you weren't whistled you'd feel let down. This is well illustrated in this 1973 cartoon by George Booth.



When Bizet's Carmen was first performed in 1875, she worked in a cigar factory rather than a brothel to appease the sentiments of the day. In 2014, the West Australia Opera in Perth, decided not to stage the production as it was set in a cigarette factory but was able to be set in a brothel.



With Petrol shortages on the horizon, I am reminded of living in New Zealand when Car Free days were introduced from July 1979 – May 1980 and bicycles became a popular mode of transport.

Luckily it didn't result in Bicycle Face, a supposed medical condition, said to be caused by the anxiety for women trying to balance on two wheels, combined with the grimacing expression riders make while straining to pedal. This was thought to cause a state of nervous exhaustion and permanent facial disfigurement, giving them a wrinkled, masculine appearance.

Thanks to our friends in Tamar Valley U3A for this

Also a blast from the past is Trevithick Day in Camborne if nostalgia is your thing. Some members of the Rocks N Ruins group went along.



Rocks N Ruins at Buckfastleigh

It was another railway themed outing for Rocks N Ruins in April. The group went to the South Devon Railway at Buckfastleigh.

We started the day with a train ride alongside the River Dart to Staverton and then to Totnes Riverside. Afterwards we were treated to a tour of the various workshops at Buckfastleigh. The income from the workshops is a large part of what keeps this heritage railway going.



The Boiler Workshop



Taking on water at Totnes



The Carriage Workshop

Firstly, we went to the main engineering workshop where wheels from heritage locomotives from all over the country have new tyres fitted. Following a break for lunch we saw the boiler workshop where the steam boilers for two locomotives were being refurbished. The day ended in the carriage workshop where a fine 1910 GWR carriage was being refurbished and made ready to enter service shortly.



When push comes to shove?

A very interesting insight into what keeps the heritage railway movement going.

Thanks are due to Hywel Edwards for coordinating the day and to Jack Ayling of the South Devon Railway for his excellent, enthusiastic and informative tour.

Future outings already planned are as diverse as a visit to King Edward Mine and a walk along our own Tavistock Canal in addition to going underground at Beer Quarry Caves.

John Noblet

Rocks N Ruins at Plym Bridge

Plym Bridge and the lower Plym valley is now a place to go for relaxation and enjoyment. People go there for a stroll, to walk the dog, run, cycle or just to enjoy the peace and quiet along the side of the River Plym. The Rocks N Ruins group, however, went there in March to look at what remains of several significant industries.

Meeting at the park-and-ride, the group firstly went to the Long Bridge across the Plym. It's not quite as long as it once was but the parish boundary stones of Plympton St Mary and Eggbuckland are still either side of the river. Plymouth did not reach this far until the 1960's. The double span cast iron railway bridge is all that remains to be seen here of the transport network that is lost under the Marsh Mills conurbation.

The Marsh Mills themselves were one of the largest corn mills in the area and had two water wheels. These were powered by water from the River Plym along a leat nearly 2 miles long. This leat was subsequently enlarged to form the basis of the Cann Quarry Canal to carry slate from the quarries on either side of the river above Plym Bridge. (The mill was demolished in the 1960's to make way for a retail park). The canal itself was replaced by a horse drawn tramway and the remains are still to be seen above Plym Bridge. Below there all evidence is now buried beneath the cycle path known as Drake's Trail. (Old Sir Francis certainly got around, didn't he?)



Also at Plym Bridge is the bottom of the cable incline plane of the Lee Moor Tramway. This was constructed to bring China clay from the Lee Moor area down to Sutton Harbour for shipment. From the bottom of the incline the trucks loaded with China clay were pulled by horses until as late as the 1960s.

The most recent activity of an industrial nature was the Great Western Railway line from Plymouth to Tavistock constructed in 1859 by none other than I K Brunel. The line closed in the 1960s (even before the Beeching Axe) but has been taken over in part by the Plym Valley Railway.

A small band of enthusiasts operate a heritage railway from Marsh Mills to Plym Bridge with occasional passenger services. The RNR group was shown around the station area, the workshops and some of the railway paraphernalia which is being lovingly restored.



Our guides, Ian and Dave (who are, incidentally, Plymouth u3a members) were so enthusiastic that it was impossible not to get inspired.

After all the rain that we had had an early March, it turned out to be a pleasant day with only one little(?) shower.

John Noblet

Play Reading Group

The play-reading group is almost as old as Tavy District u3a itself, having been formed in 2003. It has been going strong ever since, even during lockdown. We met via Zoom, with members exchanging books via Mary Brock's dustbin cupboard!

The leader is the very capable Caroline Lorenzi, and over the years we have read a wide variety of plays, from Shakespeare to Oscar Wilde, from Alan Ayckbourn to J B Priestley.

Copies of plays are ordered from Exeter Library and sent through to Tavistock. There is a small fee for this system, which simply requires each member to pay a few pounds from time to time. Caroline does an excellent job of sourcing the plays; as the group has grown the problem of finding plays with enough characters has become trickier but it is very rare for anybody to be left out with nothing to do.

There is always much enjoyment and laughter to be had, with stimulating conversation at coffee-time. The group meets twice monthly on a Wednesday morning from 10 until 12. Though it is full at the moment, Caroline has said that she is very willing to help anybody who would like to set up another group. Our u3a is for ever expanding!

Felicity Luckman

Lukesland

It was four seasons in one day as the Garden Visits group made their trip to Lukesland!

Fortified with delicious soup from the café, donning macs, we set off exploring the stunning gardens, waterfalls and streams, finally finding the tree carved buzzard at the top of the garden.

A wonderful day and thoroughly recommended for a family and friends visit!

Janet Hunt



The deadline for the next Newsletter is 20th June
Please send to **u3a@johnnobllet.co.uk**

Beryl Cook

The Exhibition at The Box.

I'm sure you have been, or are intending to visit, the Beryl Cook exhibition in The Box, showing until 31st May.

If not, I urge you to go whether you are a fan or not but, do avoid children's holiday times! You need to book a day and time slot online (although walk-ins are usually available) and possibly make a donation to The Box.

A self-taught artist who was refused recognition by the Royal Academy, Beryl Cook documented Plymouth's social history in her unique way in the 70s and 80s. She was a great observer and enjoyed humourising what she saw. Larger ladies and the gay scene in Plymouth, with all the regularly frequented venues, came under her scrutiny. She also had a fascination with shoes and everyday activities.

It is a joyful exhibition, showing many of Beryl's 500 + paintings, some from private collections, as well as those loaned from other galleries.

More than 60.000 people have visited the exhibition up to the beginning of April. Whilst you are there, make sure that you go upstairs and watch the videoed interview of the lady herself.

Beryl Cook Sculptures

There are now 5 life-sized 3D sculptures set in Plymouth for visitors to enjoy. They have been placed in locations across Plymouth that inspired the paintings.

They have been created in partnership with the Theatre Royal Plymouth to celebrate her distinctive humour and love for everyday life, by turning her famous characters into unmissable public art.

Janet Hunt

The deadline for
the next Newsletter
is 20th June



Hips and Chips



The Market



Tom Dancing

Photos by **John Noblet**



Sailors and Seagulls



Sabotage

Beryl Cook Continued

These are the original four sculptures of the Beryl Cook Sculpture Trail around Plymouth city centre, and on the Hoe and Barbican.

Fish N Chips, on the previous page was added later and a sixth one is promised soon.

You surely cannot help but smile?