

Tiverton u3a Newsletter

learn, laugh, live

Volume 10 Issue 2

February 2025



Coming up - It's the Chinese Year of the Snake

GENERAL MEETING
Thursday 23rd January
10:00 for 10:30am

Our Life on Stage
- performing in clubs, cabaret, theatre and cruising

presented by Vivien and Barry (A Touch of Class)

Tea coffee and biscuits as usual

The talk will be followed by our New Year Meat and Salads Buffet for those who
have booked their place
The Bar will be open from Noon

Moorhayes Community Centre Lea Road Tiverton EX16 6SU

And for our next meeting.....

On Thursday 27 February

Cherry Bird. from Amnesty International

Chairman	Mike Warren	Tivertonu3achair@gmail.com
Treasurer	Sue Robbins	Tivertonu3atreasurer@gmail.com
Secretary	Irene Butler	Tivertonu3asecretary@gmail.com
Membership	Annie Foot	Tivertonu3amembership@gmail.com
Webmaster	John O'Connor	Tivertonu3awebmaster@gmail.com
Social Media	Angie Cheshire	Tivertonu3asocialmedia@gmail.com
Technical	Fergus McGilp	Tivertonu3atech@gmail.com
Newsletter Editor and Vice Chairman	Nigel Blandford	Tivertonu3aeditor@gmail.com
Meetings Secretary	Wendy Bond	Tivertonu3ameetings@gmail.com
Groups Coordinator	Maggie Roberts	Tivertonu3agroupleaders@gmail.com
Committee Member	Richard Truman	Tivertonu3acommittee1@gmail.com

Website <https://tivertonu3a.u3asite.uk>
Facebook <https://facebook.com/tivertonu3a>
Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/tivertonu3>

Tiverton u3a welcomes seven new members this month:

- **Anna Blakeway**
- **Liz Chadwick**
- **Sue Horn**
- **Fiona Mullin**
- **Nick Saville**
- **Fiona Passmore**
- **Susie Swarbrick**

FROM THE COMMITTEE

November Meeting

The Mount Elgon Elephant Project (MEEP) in Kenya was the fascinating topic covered at our November meeting. Our speaker was Stephen Powles, formerly a vet who changed careers some years ago to pursue a lifelong interest in wildlife, wildlife photography and conservation. His material has featured in TV appearances and in the national Press and from his presentation at the meeting, it is not hard to see why. His photography focusses on interesting and challenging wildlife subjects, some nearer to home but on this occasion, we found ourselves in Kenya.

His family ties to Kenya, and specifically, the Mount Elgon National Park in the west of the country, go back to his grandfather in the 1920s and also other family members.

Although the Park is really modest in size within Kenya, the mountain, an extinct volcano, reaches over 14,000 feet above sea level and is pitted with caves which afford shelter and, importantly, a source of salt to elephants who venture deeply into the caves and have been instrumental in extending the caves by their presence in seeking salt. Although on the border of Uganda with its much larger National Park, the elephants are currently confined to Kenya where conservation through MEEP and the relative absence of elephant hunting for ivory, has maintained the population. Currently, numbers are rising modestly and it is anticipated that there may be sufficient to extend a breeding programme to commit some animals to Uganda to re-establish their elephant population.

A success for conservation in one country which stands to benefit a neighbour. Stephen, a loss to the veterinary profession, presents a focus for conservation through his truly fabulous photography, his empathy and, on this occasion, his family ties with a far-off region and its outstanding beauty and its gentle giants. *Mike W*



Anyone interested in Short Tennis?

We are planning on holding a one-off Short Tennis session in the near future. But before anything else is planned we would like to know if anyone else might be interested in finding out more and possibly joining a new group.

If you are please contact **Diane Lewis on 01884 821329 dianejoy33@hotmail.com** or **Annie Foot on 07706112569 anniefoot29@gmail.com**

Come and join us ! We would love to hear from you !

Live For Today, Plan For Tomorrow

We are being offered the opportunity to run this short course jointly with Exe Valley u3a but would like to know how many people would be interested, before we book the venue. This six-session series of talks and workshops will be informative and thought provoking. The aim is to help people to explore concerns around death and to open a discussion about what we need to do to prepare friends and family for when we leave them. To be more precise it will cover subjects like writing wills, powers of attorney, advanced decisions and funeral planning.

This course comes highly recommended by those who attended it at Culm Valley u3a. I have seen the feedback members gave and it was described as excellent and extremely helpful and some said that it actually helped them to broach the subject with their families. The two-hour group sessions would be fortnightly and the dates we are planning are as follows:-

3rd,17th and 31st October; 14th and 28th November and finally the 12th December 2025

Sue Hooper Lawrie who organises the course has assured us that costs will amount to covering expenses of room hire and transport as the speakers themselves provide their time for free. There is an accompanying handbook to support the information given and with further details of useful websites.

If you think you would like to book a place and would be available this autumn, please contact me:-

Maggie Roberts at Tivertonu3agroupleaders@gmail.com or ring me on 07908340876.

I will be at the January 23rd meeting and staying for lunch, if anybody wants to ask questions about the course content.

U3A Online Learning Events

Several members have recommended u3a Online Learning Events. They're free via Zoom and cover a wide range of subjects.

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events#Events>

Membership Renewals 2025

Thank you to everyone who has already renewed their membership subscription for 2025.

However there are several members who have yet

to do so. If you have overlooked your payment, please do it as soon as possible (there is a six week window before the system removes unsubscribed members).

There are several ways to pay - online through the Tiverton u3a website, cash at a meeting (we now have a card reader for an easier payment).

Or, send a cheque to me @ : 14 Apple Drive, Willand EX15 2SF

The Bank details are:.

Name of account :

- Tiverton University of the Third Age Trust

Sort Code : 60-21-27

Account Number : 72200235

Ref : Your surname + initials 2025

A bank transfer is preferred and often the easiest method of payment.

£10 full membership - £6 Associate members

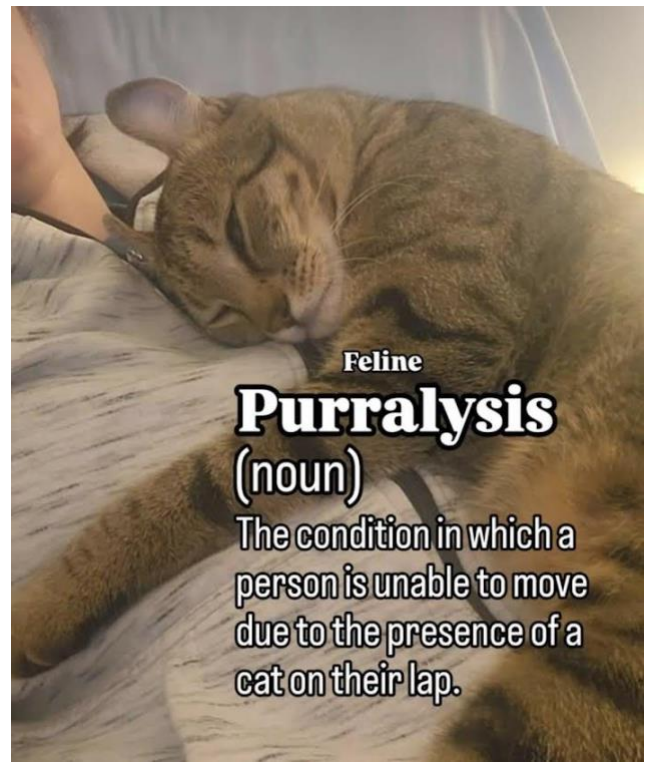
If circumstances have changed or you have decided not to renew your membership it would be very helpful if you could let us know, so that we can amend the records.

If you have any queries please email me @ tivertonu3amembership@gmail.com or Sue Robbins tivertonu3atreasurer@gmail.com

Many thanks

Annie Foot

Membership Secretary



I THOUGHT YOU WERE HAVING A DRY JANUARY.....

I am. This is a dry Martini

GROUP REPORTS

Unless they have specifically requested otherwise, group coordinators contact details have been omitted on the newsletter page of the website, as this is a public document. However, they can be found in the "members only" section of the website, which needs a password, already provided to members. - *Nigel*



Always Write
Coordinator:
Heather Bingham

We've changed our group name to 'Always Write' and at our first meeting this year on 22nd January, we're also going to discuss a different (but fixed) Wednesday of the month to meet, and a change to meeting in the morning, rather than the afternoon. ---*Heather.*



Cryptic Crosswords

Coordinator:
Graeme Cozens

How To Solve Cryptic Crosswords

New for 2025, an opportunity to learn some of the ins-and-outs of, and some of the fiendishly fun thinking behind cryptic crosswords.

I shall be offering a 90-minute “workshop”, probably in March, where you will gain some insights into solving cryptic crosswords, and cross words with their challenges. There will be no cross words, just a friendly, helpful and fun exploration session together!

No previous experience is necessary, though you may wish to come along and hone your existing skills. The aim is to equip you with some tips and ideas to be able to tackle the crossword in the U3A monthly newsletter. Or the one in your favourite periodical.

If this sounds like something for you, please let me know using my email address below. At this stage I am judging the level of interest so I can book a convenient venue.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Graeme Cozens (COZENSG@YAHOO.CO.UK)



Economics

Coordinator:
Mike Barlow

Alan led a discussion in December about **how the UK did in 2024** in relation to other OECD countries. We scored well by not having a significant overcrowding problem and also by not being exposed to extreme temperatures. We scored badly in terms of the levels of outdoor pollution and in terms of housing

affordability. There were many other areas of wellbeing examined but you'll need to come to our meetings if you want to find out more !

Our next meeting will be at **10am on Wed 5th February** hosted by Mike W. We don't have a fixed agenda but it looks pretty certain we'll be talking about the incoming president of the USA! Contact mikeandsue.barlow@gmail.com if you're interested to join our discussions.

~ *Mike Barlow*



Gardens

Coordinator:
Margaret Chumbley

We recently welcomed in December four new members to the Gardening Group bringing membership of the Group to 51.



Also, in December members enjoyed Christmas lunch at Tiverton Golf Club when Joy and Ken received the prize for attending the most meetings /visits; 11 out of 14 in 2024.

Our first meetings of 2025 will be a Planning meeting at The Old Well Garden Center, and a visit to a NGS garden at East Worlington to see the crocuses. I will advise members of the Group by email when I know the dates. - *Margaret*



German Conversation

Coordinator:
John Smith.

We completed our Michaelmas term in early December with a German Schlachplatter and Stollen at the end of a very intensive last meeting. The commencement of the Hilary term was postponed due to illness (hopefully not caused by too much Schlachplatter or other over-indulgence). We meet again in the week of the monthly meeting when we will talk about our activities (or lack of) over Weihnachten (Christmas) and Silvester (New Year's Eve).
- *John*



Going Places

Coordinators:
John O'Connor
Tony Lowe, Chris Steele

Exeter Energy Recovery Facility

The visit to the Exeter Energy Recovery Facility will take place on Tuesday 21st January. If you didn't make the list for this trip and aren't already on the reserve list but would like to visit this facility, please get in touch as I'm pleased to say that we

now have a second visit booked for the 15th of April. Email: chrissteele164@gmail.com

Birdwatching Cruise on the River Exe

The booking for this cruise on Tuesday, February 25, 2025, is now confirmed, and a report on the event will be published later in the year.

Concert by the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra

Booking for this concert on 13th March is now complete. However, if there is sufficient interest I will endeavour to book a further concert later in the year.

Future Events

The following visits are planned in the coming months:

- SS Great Britain and Bristol Harbourside
- RNLI College, Poole

- *Tony*



Trad Jazz

Coordinator:
Mike Barlow

The next sessions will be at our normal venues:

12th Feb Roger Mark's Fiesta Five Langford Budville Jubilee Hall
19th Feb Gordon's Algiers Strutters at Uffculme

Magelake Hall

The full list of the sessions planned for 2025 is on the Trad Jazz page of our website.

~ *Mike Barlow*



Line Dancing

Coordinator:
Mich Bowers

Back after the festive season, and a gentle session to ease us in gently. Maybe a bit more lively next time? - 27th January. So if you need to get a bit of exercise, please feel free to join us, I promise to be gentle!!

Next sessions

27th January and 10th February. --Mich



Local Theatre

Coordinator:
Betty Thrall

Ticket money for our next block booking must be paid by January 23rd monthly meeting £10 each .The Junior Operatic production of "GREASE" is February 20th .Do join us for what promises to be a spectacular production and will set your feet tapping to the music of Summer Nights ,You're the One that I

want ,Greased Lightnin and be reminded of John Travolta and Olivia Newton –John performed by this very talented and award winning Group.

Betty 01884 242998



Mahjongg

Coprdrinator:
Celia Hicks

Mahjong is a tile based game which originated in China. The tiles are based on Chines characters and symbols, Bamboos, Circles, Characters, Winds and Dragons. Preferably in a group of four, you aim to make a pattern of tiles by simple exchange. It is not difficult but like all games there are nuances which are taken on

board slowly.....and, I insist, for fun. My groups follow the British Mahjong Association Rules but I advise no-one to read them (or any others) until they have sat down and been instructed on how to play. Then all becomes clear! Repetitive DOING becomes learning!

There are no fees as we meet in peoples' homes. I provide the Mahjong set and racks. I am willing to come from Bampton to any region close to Tiverton so do get in touch if you feel you'd like to know more. Alternatively I am willing to host at home. 01398 332101 (with answerphone) and celiahicks13@gmail.com - Celia



Photography

Coordinator:
Roger Gunn

The **December** Photography Group meeting was held chez Barlows in Bampton. The log fire was roaring, refreshments in the form of cheese, spiced mead and homemade linzer tort (thank you Sue) were served with mince pies for afters. 5 members enjoyed the generous festive hospitality. Many thanks.

We did view a few free choice photos. Sue had recently taken some delightful snowy Bampton scenes and a selection from their recent trip to Bath, where amongst other more serious subjects was a dog wearing hoof style shoes to match its reindeer coat complete with antlers! Whatever next?!

Roger presented many scenic shots of Edinburgh from several vantage points including Arthur's Seat. Whilst we had great photos of many of the sights of that fine city including the castle, a

snowy Drummond Street, the Royal Yacht Britannia and the big wheel (every city must have one!) we were NOT treated to images of the SIX Wetherspoon pubs he visited there. Another time maybe?

Phil pinched a load of photos taken by his brother in law who was recently in Kaunas (Lithuania). Whilst his wife was receiving a partial knee replacement and undergoing intensive physio he wandered around the city taking pictures of artworks, sculpture, street art and graffiti. Phil added to these with images of some impressive graffiti near Tiverton Parkway. - *Roger*

Then it was **January**. Everyone had something and so there were only four of us fit enough to show - mostly - photos of our youthful selves. How present appearances deceive: both of the bald or balding men were shown as boys with luxuriant heads of hair, although eightish-year-old Tim was by far the better-presented of the two in all his photos. Scruffier Mike was playing, appearing angelic (once only!) in a baby car, or wielding games' implements of some or other kind before looking like a salesman spiv or, later, Che Guevara, while Roger had composed a brilliant video to take us from rustic babe to lithe young sixties with-it, bequipped (but married to a stunner) male, via his work in Saudi Arabia and Colombia. Short, white-haired Sue, it turned out, had had long red hair in the distant past.

There were a few other, mostly modern-art shots from a Christmas trip to Metz in France and Germany, plus some wonderful skies and lights from Tim in Tiverton. Thanks, Rog, for hosting us. We'll be at your place again for 10 a.m. on Thurs. 13th Feb., with an open choice of shots.

- *Sue*



Railway Group

Coordinator:
Jose Kimber

The Railway Group is now restarting. As there is now only a small number of us, we are meeting in each others' houses and our first meeting will be at Terry Dapp's House, 1 Ashleigh Park, Bampton EX16 9LF Tel 01398

332252. Please let Terry and me know if you are planning to attend.

We will be discussing future meeting topics and possible future outings and any Tiverton U3A members will be welcome to join in any visits. We are considering widening the remit of the group to take in buses and other industrial heritage following the demise of the Industrial Heritage Group, in the hope of attracting more interest in group.

If anyone is interested in joining the group, or is able to offer a relevant talk to the group, please can you let me know.

The February meeting will be on Friday 28 February, with the venue to be decided at the January meeting. - *Jose*



Ramblers Coordinator: Jenny Bedford

December's Ramble

In surprisingly fair weather, eight ramblers set off on an intentionally mud-avoiding walk beginning with 2 miles on the canal and some road walking. We then moved onto the permissive path kindly provided and

maintained by a local farmer, crossing two fields and then following a track. I had discovered on the recce that a huge tree had fallen, completely covering the path but had managed to break off sufficient small branches to enable us to clamber over it. Despite the traffic noise from the road and the occasional passing train, the fields and the little River Lynher gave the impression of calm countryside. Via a rather artistically decorated tunnel, a carpark and a track we made our way back to the canal and thence the cars. No Mud! - Jenny.



Battling through the fallen tree

January's Ramble

We had a good turnout for the first ramble of 2025 ably led by Mike Phillips: walking the excesses of Christmas perhaps! It was nice to see a few faces we hadn't seen for a while and a new recruit.

Meeting at Knightshayes we took a well trodden route up to the Fire Beacon before descending back to the house and completing the 'figure of eight' by doing the Impey Walk - all in all 4.5 to 5 miles. It was a tad muddy underfoot but dry, sunny and quite mild. Thanks Mike.

A good start and let's hope we can keep up the enthusiasm and numbers throughout the year. *Jan Proud*

Ramble on Tuesday February 11th, 2025



February's ramble will be led by Elisabeth from Ashbrittle Green starting at 10am. The walk will be between 4.5 and 5 miles and will follow a circular route via Staple Cross back to Ashbrittle. There will be some uphill climbs but not too strenuous.

A more detailed description of the route will be published at the beginning of February as some of the paths taken will be dependent on the prevailing weather.

Jenny



Skittles

Coordinators:
John Carr
Janet Loader

The Monday Skittles have now re-started after the Christmas/New Year break and will continue until May. There is always room for more members to come along, please give Janet a ring beforehand. We play at Tiverton Town Football Club starting at 7pm playing until 8.30. The charge is three pounds per person, drinks are available at the bar and there is plenty of parking. We look forward to seeing you.

Joint Co-ordinators: John Carr (01404 841367) and Janet Loader (01884 252116)



Snooker

Coordinator:
John Anderson

A small, social group catering for all levels of Snooker ability (up to "average"!).

Our normal meeting dates at Halberton Village Hall are the 1st and 3rd Friday each month. Our start time is 3.30pm.

Conveniently, buses from Tiverton stop at

the door, so you can use your bus-pass to get there. I am a keyholder for opening up, so give me a ring beforehand if you would like to join in and have a game or two.

John. Tel: 07947 000757



**WALK and
TALK**

Strollers and Twalkers

Coordinator:
Chris Mumford

TWALKERS - These walks are out in the countryside, generally within 10 miles of Tiverton. The maximum distance is no more than 3.6 miles and take no more than 90 minutes. The venue changes weekly.

STROLLERS - Venue changes monthly for a gentle walk lasting no more than 60 minutes

around the streets of Tiverton.

For more details and a programme, please contact Chris Mumford:

chris.mumford21@gmail.com



Short Trek

Coordinator:
Phil Akers

The December Short Trek was indeed short – intentionally so, as it was combined with our annual Christmas lunch.

Starting from the Ashill Inn, we were

led by Jackie on a meandering path around the village, finishing in time to have a few drinks before being served with a copious lunch, much enjoyed by all.

- Nigel



The first Short Trek of 2025 will be starting from Killerton House Car Park (National Trust) on Friday 24th January. The route is approximately 6 miles going from the car park up to Columbjohn Wood, down past the chapel and onto Rewe. From Rewe church onto Brookleigh, into Columbjohn and up to Danes Wood and back to the car park via Francis Court Farm. There is some lane walking but if it has been wet, that will be a change from trudging through mud! Bring a packed lunch. Boots, gaiters and poles are advisable kit. Toilets and cafe at Killerton. Possible de-brief at The Merry Harriers. Look forward to seeing you there. --- Phil



Table Tennis

Coordinators:
Katherine Green
Lorne Loxterkamp

The group meets every Monday, except Bank Holidays, from 10am to 12 noon at Sunningmead Community Centre. We have four tables and generally play doubles to ensure that everyone gets as many games as possible. Currently new members are welcome, but spaces are limited. We endeavour to help those with less experience of

the game, but unfortunately we are unable to accommodate complete beginners.

Anyone interested in joining the group should contact Katherine and Lorne.



Thursday Lunch

Coordinator:
Angie Cheshire

In spite of severe weather conditions due to snow and ice in the area only the day before, 21 people turned up for lunch at the Thorverton Arms to enjoy good food from their new menu for 2025. Large or small portions were served by very friendly staff.

We were then treated to an interesting

talk by Ian, a local resident of 50 years, on the history of the Thorverton Arms.

It's certainly a pub worth visiting again. - Barbara and Jane

Our February lunch will be at the Poltimoor Inn, North Molton, organised by Tony and Liz.

We then have March at the Ashill Inn, Ashill; April at The Mitre, Witheridge; Thorverton Arms again, in May; and into summer with The Beer Engine, subject to confirmation.

Members - let me know if you want to lunch at the Politimoor Inn, if you haven't already signed up. *Angie*

angelacheshire@hotmail.com



Trekking
Coordinator:
Gordon Cleaver

The December Trek

Whilst 2024 must go down as the wettest Trekking year for many years, at least the December trek was dry for a couple of hours before the heavens opened! Aply led by Kelvin ,6 Trekkers met at Haddon Hill for a circumnavigation of Wimbleball reservoir, despite the

dire weather forecast. The “Banana Break” was taken in a very convivial bird hide overlooking the Lake. We were then lucky enough to reach Bessom Bridge before the rain started. The tracks then got wetter and muddier until we followed a Trail of crumbs to find Hansel and Gretel’s “cottage” in the woods for our lunch. In reality this was a semi derelict old hut with a ramshackle door and bench seat but it did provide some shelter from the rain as well as a talking point!

The Debrief was held in the Exeter Inn where we thanked Kelvin for an interesting trek whilst drying out and being amused by the crazy pub puppy that had been appropriately named Boris!

The February Trek – Thursday 6th Feb 2025 – 10.00 AM

The February Trek will be led by Phil A. The Trek starts and finishes in Chawleigh. There is a lay-by opposite Hollow Tree Farm which is at the NW end of the village on the B3042 at map ref SS707127, where we should be able to park and start. We will start by walking back through the village and turn right onto Shooting Lane. At Southcott Cross we will head across the fields towards Homeland Bridge. We will then pass through Homeland Wood and Southcott Wood to Nethercott and on through Upcott Wood. At Chawleigh Weave we will cross the Little Dart River before heading up to Chulmleigh (toilet and a tea shop). We will avoid the A39 main road and walk down towards Chulmleigh Bridge and onto Park Mill Farm, Chawleigh Barton Wood then to Hollow Tree Cross and the cars. It’s around 10 miles with 413metres of ascent. Walking poles will help over much of the terrain.

**Please let me know if you are planning to come on this Trek or you are interested in joining the Trekking Group please contact Gordon. - 01884 242563
grcleaver54@gmail.com**



Wednesday Pub Lunch

Coordinator:
Trevor Ellmore

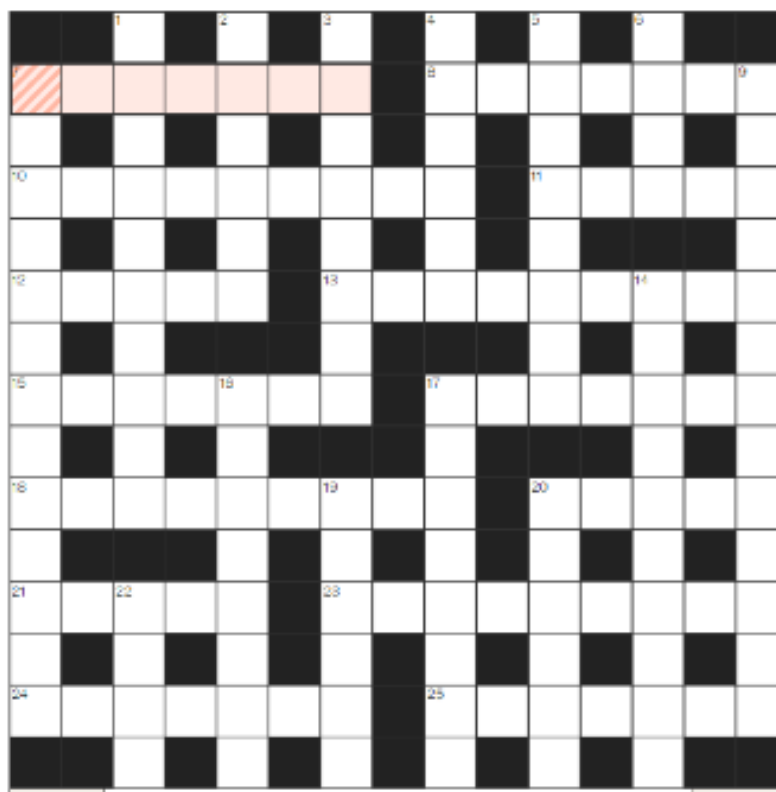


Well, despite the weather forecasting snow, on Wednesday 8th January, which was not welcome especially as we were heading for Sampford Moor, however we all arrived safely. There were only a few flurries as we were leaving after having a most enjoyable Lunch. I know I have said this many times before, but you can't go better than eating at a family run business. Fiona at The Blue Ball is a fine chef and it is always a delight to consume her excellent dishes, especially as she opens up Wednesday lunch time just for us. I could see that members ordered across the menu, however you have to wait a while to indulge, as there were twenty of us, but it is worth waiting for. One of our members phoned me the following day to say they had forgotten to pay for a starter, and had lost some sleep worrying about it, however all was very quickly corrected with a phone call. This had not been picked up by Fiona because just after we left, they had a power outage for several hours. Weren't we lucky we got our meals when we did.

Our Venue for the 5th of February is at the Ponte Vecchio Tiverton. Ideal to be local in February as we don't want the weather to throw anything at us again. If you have not booked for Tiverton please contact me ASAP.

- Trevor

Cryptic Crossword #42: January 2025 (Solution at the end of this newsletter)



Across

- 7 Um, with the entrances to the pits, is where you will find the relay, maybe (7)
- 8 Initially the European currency unit and firstly a degree of risk is in central America (7)
- 10 Sounds like a lazy fair lady! (9)
- 11 Toxic language includes a loud noise (5)
- 12 Gusher with no energy is a sign of the unknown (5)
- 13 Highfliers following the prop group? (3,3,3)
- 15 Wash that cash! (7)
- 17 Write a note in perfect contrition (7)
- 18 One who looks after the money is right after the valuables (9)
- 20 Cute voles find a solution (5)
- 21 Altogether in the terminal lounge (2,3)
- 23 Team put out subsidiary matter (4,5)
- 24 Latex steam may produce a pain (7)
- 25 A sum of money for a particular purpose ends into a fancy tip (7)

Down

- 1 A French stick with French wine in Louisiana (5,5)
- 2 Whether you're going North, West or East it's still easier for us than walking (6)
- 3 One who flatters, according to popular saying (8)
- 4 Adele texted, had to cross out (6)
- 5 Meal with a public utility company – a midday feast (8)
- 6 Everage even disowned Northern Australia originally (4)
- 7 Hilarious team-sharing (4-9)
- 9 Third Revenger treated is the consecrated Bishop (5,8)
- 14 Snug Yorkshire girls opted for eye protection (10)
- 16 Don't let princess look a bit yellow (8)
- 17 Parade is one way to find Nirvana (8)
- 19 Lustre sadly describing a dry crackling sound (6)
- 20 Trip is a distillation (6)
- 22 Hands lose their softness when begging for charity (4)

