

Tiverton u3a Newsletter

learn, laugh, live

Volume 10 Issue 4

April 2025



GENERAL MEETING

Thursday 27th March
10:00 for 10:30am

Our AGM

followed by
Dr Karen Stead-Dexter
giving a talk on

Animal & Nature Connection for Wellbeing
(she will be bringing along some of her birds of prey)

Tea, coffee, biscuits and newsletters as usual

Moorhayes Community Centre, Lea Road, Tiverton EX16 6SU

And for our next meeting.....On Thursday 24th April

Lewis Paterson
General Manager of
Knightshayes Court

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

Tiverton u3a welcomes four new members this month:

**Ann Carey
Michael Deller
Jackie Young
David Botsford**

and regrets to announce the death of longstanding member, Ben Mayo, former coordinator of the Trekking Group and member of the Short Trek, Ramble, Table Tennis and Photography groups

FROM THE COMMITTEE

February Meeting

“Never has the work of Amnesty International (AI) been more important” was the profound message of Cherry Bird at our February meeting. Cherry is one of many volunteers who work on behalf of this humanitarian, campaigning, non-governmental organisation which has representation in over 60 countries across the world. From its founding in the UK in 1961, we learned that Amnesty aims to defend the human rights of the weak and prisoners of conscience and fights, increasingly, for feminine justice in many countries. Amnesty’s motto is “It is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness”, hence the candle in the organisation’s logo. A very healthy discussion followed. Just to add a local flavour to this organisation, Cherry was accompanied by some of her Mid-Devon Amnesty colleagues. *Mike W*



If you missed this presentation, or would like to hear it again, it can be accessed here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nzN72bDvwc8&authuser=1>

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>

Short Course - Drawing Group

The hybrid ExeValley/Tiverton drawing group met for their second meeting, raring to take up the new challenges that Sue Hooper-Lawrie would present, and wow, there were some challenges. This session was to focus on line – where it starts, how it travels and where it ends. There were tricky warm up exercises, interesting discussion about the role of the left and right side of our brains and then down to the nitty gritty. We were asked to draw a picture upside down...relax – it was the picture, not us!

This made us really look at the marks that we were making on the paper. Most of us found it hard work but the revelation when we turned the picture the right way round was both funny and satisfying. Sue gave us some good advice on how to critique our own work. After the break...yes we did need a break...we used a continuous line technique to draw our own hand without taking the pencil off the page. Easy? no. Fun? Yes. We have our homework – no fear of detention – and we are looking forward to the next session.

Fuming over the cost of fuel ..
Worried about your big ends ..
Depressed about the results of your MoT

You've probably got car owner virus....



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

The group meets for 2 hours from 10 am in the morning on the 4th Wednesday of the month. Our new, permanent venue is the downstairs meeting room of the Lighthouse café in Bampton Street, Tiverton.

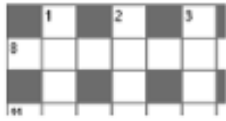
Our prompt for the timed writing in the March session was a choice of 3 ‘What if ...’ scenarios. We also reminded ourselves of the Haiku format with a view to displaying a sample of our efforts at a future U3A meeting.

Also at March’s meeting we shared our writing ‘homework’ on “A ghost or haunting” story for adults ... and it’s nowhere near Halloween yet! Some of us also attended a creative writing workshop at Tiverton Museum and an open mic night for short story writers in Crediton – all very challenging but exciting; more later on those adventures!



Our next meeting will take place on 23rd April 2025 at 10 am. Please contact the co-ordinator - for more information about joining our group and what the theme of that session will be – via email: habingham@hotmail.com. We look forward to welcoming new members who are keen to explore their writing aspirations with us! co-ordinator - for more information about joining our group and what the theme of

that session will be – via email: habingham@hotmail.com. We look forward to welcoming new members who are keen to explore their writing aspirations with us! - Heather.



Cryptic Crosswords

Coordinator:
Graeme Cozens

My favourite crossword clue this month: **Someone to share porridge with (8) = CELLMATE**

Please attempt and enjoy this month's cryptic crossword for more great clues. It contains an abundance of anagrams, a wealth of wordplay and is, frankly, fun!

For those of you who do not normally do it, look out for the next workshop I shall be holding after Easter. A couple of comments following my recent session for budding crossworders:

"The session was really good fun. There was a lot of laughter and light bulb moments during the session."

"Graeme broke it down into manageable steps. He gave us tools with which we could unlock the complex clues."

The group gained some insights into solving cryptic crosswords, learning some of the ins-and-outs of, and some of the fiendishly fun thinking behind them.

Newcomers are welcomed and encouraged – particularly as the 7 clue-setters would be pleased as Punch to know that more of you are enjoying our monthly offerings.

- Graeme. COZENSG@YAHOO.CO.UK



Economics

Coordinator:
Mike Barlow

We had an interesting talk from Mike W on the "Prospects for UK Agriculture". In terms of Self-Sufficiency the UK does well on Meat, Poultry & Milk products but relies heavily on imports of Fruit & Vegetables. Mike also showed us his analysis of the impact of the changed Inheritance Tax rules on typical medium, sized

farmers - it will be a problem for many of them!

Our next meeting will be on Wed 2nd April at 10am in the Halberton Village Hall. The topics will include a review of the UK Government Spring Statement due at the end of March and a discussion on the Commodities Markets (especially metals & minerals). Please contact mikeandsue.barlow@gmail.com if you wish to join our friendly group. ~ Mike Barlow



Gardens
Coordinator:
Margaret Chumbley

Twenty two Members of the Group considered themselves very lucky to see the

crocuses at East Worlington on such a beautiful sunny afternoon, as the garden opening was cancelled the previous weekend due to the storms. Many of us took the opportunity to walk along the banks of the Little Dart river and explore the woods beyond before retiring to the thatched parish hall for the most delicious cakes and teas. - *Margaret*



Folk Dancing
Coordinators:
John & Hazel Ridd

Our next date is March the 26th.

Hazel



German Conversation
Coordinator:
John Smith.

Last month, Nigel placed me on the naughty step because I forgot to send him my monthly report. My apologies.

We have continued to meet every two weeks and have maintained a good level of German. We are very fortunate to have a German and a retired modern languages teacher in our group to guide and correct us.

We continue to surprise ourselves with unusual German words. There are some interesting words for animals. Das Faultier (lit. lazy animal) means sloth. Das Stinktief (lit. stink animal) means, of course, skunk. Die Nacktschnecke (lit. naked snail) is a slug. Whoever said that German was difficult?

Did you know that we have the Germans to thank for introducing the garden gnome (das Erdmännlein) to us? One of a number of interesting facts which we discuss at our meetings.

- *John*



Going Places
Coordinators:
John O'Connor
Tony Lowe, Chris Steele

Exeter Energy Recovery Facility

A further visit is planned for Tuesday 15th April. If you haven't already asked to be put on the list but would like to go, please Email chrissteele164@gmail.com - *Chris*

Join Us for an Exciting Visit to the RNLI Training College!

We're planning a trip to the RNLI Training College on Tuesday 10 th June and inviting you to join us. Set in a stunning waterside location in Poole, the College is home to the lifesaving volunteer crew and lifeguards, as well as an award-winning hotel, restaurant, bar and shop. Our visit will include a 90-minute RNLI College Discovery Tour, where you'll see first-hand how crew members and lifeguards are trained. You'll get a behind-the-scenes look at the training facilities, and if all goes to plan, you'll even have the opportunity to experience what it's like to be on a lifeboat in an exciting simulator!

This will be a full-day trip, with a coach departing from Tiverton at 10am and returning around 6pm. The journey takes about two hours each way, and the estimated cost is £25 per person (dependant on numbers). Tours are limited to 30 people and will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. If you'd like to join us, please reply as soon as possible to secure your spot! - *Tony* lowe.tony@yahoo.co.uk

Birdwatching Cruise on the River Exe

Tiverton U3A members recently enjoyed a fantastic birdwatching cruise along the Exe Estuary. The weather treated us to plenty of sunshine, though a brisk breeze kept us on our toes! We were rewarded with a wonderful variety of birdlife, including Avocets, Spoonbills, Plovers, Dunlins, and Godwits to name but a few. A real highlight was the sight of a Peregrine Falcon swooping in on the hunt! Throughout the trip, the crew and our knowledgeable commentator were as friendly and helpful as ever, adding to the enjoyment of the experience. After three hours cruising up and down the river—accompanied by delicious pasties and warming soup—we returned to Exmouth feeling refreshed and uplifted. A big thank you to Stuart Line for another excellent cruise! - *Tony*

Our Inaugural Concert with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra

Despite some frustrating parking difficulties, our philharmonic journey began in grand style as 27 musical souls gathered at Exeter Great Hall for an exciting performance by the renowned Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra.

The theme for the night was symphonic film music, treating the audience to a selection of stirring scores and romantic melodies. From the iconic rhythms of *The Magnificent Seven* by Elmer Bernstein to the powerful compositions of John Williams and James Horner, the orchestra also brought to life the heroism and drama of *Saving Private Ryan* and *Apollo 13*. With an enthusiastic audience spurring them on, the orchestra closed the evening with an exciting encore - *Pirates of the Caribbean* - which proved to be a real showstopper! With such a fantastic start, who knows? Maybe we'll do it again but with a more classical twist... - *Tony*

Future Events

Heritage Days

We are planning a combined visit to the Coombe Martin Silver mine and Arlington Court on August 7th The website for the Silver Mine is www.combemartinmines.co.uk/ Due to health and safety issues, the mine tour will be above ground only. There will be a talk about Silver mining in North Devon. This event is free, but a donation to the mine society is encouraged. This trip will be a car share event.

Additionally, to coincide with the Heritage Days festival we are planning a visit to Arlington Court. This event takes place in September, and will be free. The actual date for this will be announced in June. Arlington court is home to the National carriage collection and is well worth visiting. This

trip will be a car share event. Details of dates and times will follow, once the Heritage Days festival programme, has been published.

SS Great Britain and Bristol Harbourside.

A visit is planned for later in the year.



Trad Jazz
Coordinator:
Mike Barlow

Wivey Has Jazz had some excellent jazz (& lousy jokes) with the Two Counties Jazz Band and included a Sousaphone/Helicon in the line up shown in the photo.

Gordon's Jazz Club saw Wee 3 Plus. You will note that up until December they were the Wee4 until their Reed Player, Tony Carter sadly died. With extreme pleasure Mike obtained...(with no arm-twisting) the reed playing services of his daughter Zoe (shown in the photo below) so the lineup was Zoe Lambeth - Reeds, Mike Etherington on Cornet & Trombone, Ken Ames on Banjo and Guitar and Bob Martin on Bass....all vocalists except Bob.



They presented their programme of jazz ranging from Ragtime to Rock n Roll...illustrating in music the history of jazz from New Orleans to New York.

The April offerings are:

Wed 9th April Hotsy Totsy at the **Jubilee Hall in Langford Budville** an all female line up lead by Zoe Lambert who was part of both the groups that performed in March.

Wed 16th April Spats Langham's Hot Fingers at the **Magelake Hall in Uffculme** he's always very entertaining so you'll need to contact gordonsjazzclub@hotmail.com if you want a seat!

Hope you enjoy the sessions. If you need more information contact mikeandsue.barlow@gmail.com or search for **Trad Jazz** on our website.

~ *Mike Barlow*





Line Dancing

Coordinator:
Mich Bowers

Due to 'other commitments' no session on 24th March, it has been postponed until 31st. April dates are 14th and 28th. Hope to see all the usual group, along with anyone brave -or foolhardy - enough to have a go.

We have a 'murder of crows' so can anyone suggest an appropriate title for a gathering of line

dancers? Prizes for imaginative answers.....

- Mich



Local Theatre

Coordinator:
Betty Thrall

The booking of the ROSE and FRIENDS SPRING VARIETY SHOW requires your immediate attention. A one night show Saturday 3rd May in the New Hall 7-30 pm .Tickets go very quickly so I need your payment £13 at this week's AGM .This is in aid of Devon Air Ambulance and is an annual event of

Tiverton & District local talent .

The Tiverton Dramatic Society's next play is "CASH on DELIVERY" by Michael Clooney. Our block booking is Thursday May 15th 7-30 pm in the New Hall Tickets £10. Please put your names on the list & pay by April 24th monthly meeting You can read the synopsis in the March newsletter.

-Betty 01884 242998 (please say u3a before your name wen asked by call minder)



Mahjongg

Coprinator:
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 March Photography session had six attendees. The topic was 'Making the most of it' and we had a fine selection of shots showing different interpretations of the theme.

The photos essentially showed people, animals and plants enjoying themselves in the conditions prevailing at the time. Amongst

Nigel's selection was a carpet of colourful crocuses soaking up the sun, a modern version of 'The Last Supper' at The Mitre in Witheridge, an atmospheric foggy scene, the North Devon Coast basking in sunshine and his toddler grandson stood in front of an enormous open fridge trying to decide what to pifer.

In Mike's collection were his wife making the most of the ability to bend at the beach, enjoying a retirement drink in a sunny garden, kids digging in the sand before the tide came in, scores of scooters parked up at Exmouth seafront and taking advantage of some down time, whilst on a driving job, at the spectacular Axe Cliff Golf Club.

Sue's selection included a weed making the most of a broken clay plant pot, a lonely crocus enjoying the space in a pot, an interesting wine bottle and dish reflection, an attempt at photographing aligned planets and capturing just Venus and a fat pigeon enjoying a bird bath in the garden.

Tim and Val had recently visited London and made the most of getting aerial views of Battersea Power Station and the surrounding area. Unfortunately, they were not blessed with good weather so fog and rain provided 'atmosphere'. The acoustic mushrooms inside the Royal Albert Hall provided an interesting and unusual shot.

Phil pulled several photos from the archive depicting folk making the most of a (slightly boozy?) expat lifestyle. There were also images of ducks, swans and walkers enjoying the canal on a bright, sunny, March day

A big thank you to Tim and Val for hosting and supplying the tea, coffee and delicious biscuits. Next meeting will be on Thursday 10th April at 10am. Venue to be decided. Topic is 'Spring'. - *Phil*



Railway Group

Coordinator:
Jose Kimber

The group was deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Terry Dapp in February. Terry was one of the original founder members of the group, when it started life about 10 years ago as the Model Railway Group, and the only one remaining from that founding group

apart from me. He helped build the model railway which we had on show at the anniversary event back in 2016 and was a regular and active participant in our meetings. His mobility issues caused a problem for him in recent years, but he managed to persuade his neighbour to bring him to our meetings. He remained cheerful and retained his sharp brain and lively wit to the end. He hosted our January meeting at his house, and was due to host the February one as well, so his passing came as a shock to us all. A couple of us attended his funeral service at Bampton Church, where we learnt of his extensive career in civil engineering, involving managing some high profile projects and taking him around the world.

Out of respect for Terry we did not have a meeting in February and our March meeting as usual takes place the day after the main meeting, on **Friday 28 March at 10.30am**. It will be hosted by Eric Procter, and we will continue watching the fascinating DVDs about the Railways during the 2nd World War, which contain an amazing amount of professional quality archive footage of the railway operations in wartime, which were crucial to the war effort.

Our April meeting will be on **Friday 25th April 2025 at 10.30am**, venue to be confirmed. If you are not on my group list and would like to join the group please get in touch. - *Jose*



Ramblers
Coordinator:
Jenny Bedford

A great turnout for the March Ramble! 22 enthusiastic souls, including a few very welcome new members, met up at Beech Car Park near Burlescombe on the canal. It was a lovely sunny day with good conditions for walking. We walked two sections of the canal, one at the beginning and one at the end. In between we made our way across

fields, through some woodland, along a section of old railway line and through the attractive village of Holcombe Rogus. It was an easy route with good clear views of open countryside and a varied landscape. There was a welcome and convivial debrief at the Globe in Sampford Peverall. - *Phil*



The next Ramble on Tuesday 8th April will be led by Roger from the car park at Uplowman village hall (EX16 5DN) at 10am. The walk is 4.2 miles and goes via Broadview farm over 3 stiles then across a large field up to Paulett Hill, briefly on a lane then via fields to Whitnage. A brief climb up then down to a river crossing and Murley farm. Finally through fields to a lane and back to the car park. There are a couple of steady climbs but nothing strenuous and there should be some excellent views, weather permitting. Venue for the debrief to be decided on the day. - *Jenny*



Skittles
Coordinators:
John Carr
Janet Loader

We are running our usual sessions (Mondays 7pm to 8.30 at Tiverton Football Club) throughout March but, due to the late Easter this year, there will only be two in April. Monday 14th April will be the last session of the winter when we will have our fun and games session and buffet in order to end on a high. Give Skittles a try, it's fun!

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 Tennis

**Coordinator
Diane Lewis**

The new Short Tennis Group has been active for several weeks now, following on from two taster sessions to assess viability and interest. A small, enthusiastic group of players - some with tennis experience and some without - meet on Fridays from 10 - 11.30 am at Uplowman Hall and we

charge £2.50 to cover Hall hire and refreshments. If more players would like to join us regularly we have the option to extend sessions to two hours, so if anyone else is interested in joining us or learning more, please contact Di Lewis on 01884 821329 or 07713 311616.



Short Trek

**Coordinator:
Phil Akers**

A Walk to Remember – Mud, Stiles, and Scenic View!

Our latest adventure took us to Culmstock, where we embarked on a scenic yet challenging trek. The route began with a gentle walk along the river before leading us uphill via a series of particularly muddy footpaths. Mud was undoubtedly the theme of the

day, along with an impressive number of stiles—possibly a record for a short trek! These obstacles put our agility to the test, but with patience and determination, everyone made it over them successfully.

Along the way, we were treated to glimpses of local wildlife, including a soaring buzzard, a curious rabbit, and, allegedly, two unidentified deer. After navigating endless muddy trails, we finally reached a solid road, providing some relief underfoot. However, the respite was short-lived as we faced a steady uphill climb, complicated by the frequent passing of cars and lorries. Despite the challenge, we persevered and were rewarded with a well-earned lunch break in a peaceful woodland setting. The return journey was a more leisurely descent through open fields and quiet lanes, though not without excitement! At one point, we encountered some particularly boisterous dogs, adding an unexpected thrill to the walk. Nevertheless, most of us (!) completed the 7-mile trek in a relaxed four hours.

As a perfect ending to our adventure, we enjoyed a well-deserved drink at the Culm Valley Inn, basking in glorious sunshine.

A big thank you to Annie for leading such a great walk! - *Tony Lowe*

The March Trek on 28th will be led by Roger. This is a well walked Dartmoor trek starting from the carpark just below Hound Tor (SX739 792) the distance is 7 miles and takes in Hound Tor itself, the medieval settlement just after and a path alongside Becky Falls before returning via Manaton and Hayne Down with a visit to Bowerman's Nose if you fancy!

Total ascent is just 1300 feet and the going is good to firm!! - Roger

*it is with great sadness that one of our longest serving short trekkers, Ben Mayo, passed away on 9th March. We will greatly miss his friendship, camaraderie and banter and his soft chuckle as well as his scrapes with water and mud, his 'chaps' (cowboy style over trousers), decorating Exmoor with banana skins and his enjoyment of a good pint.
Rest in peace Ben Mayo. - Phil Akers*



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.



Thinking Allowed

**Coordinator:
Eunice Hinds**

We are a new, informal group, which has evolved from the former Philosophy / Coffee and Conversation groups. We will be discussing current issues and will examine our assumptions and consider different philosophical approaches.

We had a very interesting first meeting, hosted by Mike Warren and facilitated by Roger Stickland. Our subject was **The Right to Die** and we shared our thoughts on the position of both the individual and the surrounding family and friends. We considered both formal directives (legislation and Power of Attorney) and informal conversations.

We then had a brief discussion of the way forward and decided on a name (above).

Our next meeting will again be hosted by Mike Warren at 2pm on 17th April when the subject will be **Populism**. -- Eunice



Thursday Lunch

Coordinator:
Angie Cheshire



After some trials and tribulations, only 15 diners met at the Ashill Inn, Ashill, for lunch in March. We were seated in the garden room where we had sole occupancy. As usual portions were ample and tasty. Enjoyed so much, we will be spending our Christmas lunch there in December. ~ Angie

Our next outing is to the Mitre Inn in Witheridge, on 10th April, organised by Colin and Liz. We will have to pre-order. Email me if you would like to attend, if you haven't already signed up.

Angie. angelacheshire@hotmail.com



Trekking

Coordinator:
Gordon Cleaver

The March Trek

In early March fourteen trekkers enjoyed a lovely 10 mile trek in Somerset. Aply led by Gordon we were joined by yet another new member who slotted seamlessly into the group.

Starting just outside of Watchet the group assembled at St Decumans Cemetery. Before the trek proper we diverted to visit St Decumans Well where Gordon told us the fascinating history of this beautiful and truly spiritual site. The name comes from the Welsh saint who gave the beautiful Church its name and of course there is a legend - St. Decuman arrived across the Severn Sea from Wales, rather surprisingly accompanied by a cow. This does make sense as the saint was thus assured of a constant supply of fresh milk. His intention of course was to convert the locals to Christianity and found a Church. Events that followed his arrival are told in numerous lurid accounts. His arrival had caused quite a stir, and he was eyed with deep suspicion and one local inhabitant, taking exception to his presence, lopped off his head. Even with today's advances in medical science, it would suggest that this was curtains, but not a bit of it. The saint, undeterred, calmly picked up his severed head, walked to the well, washed it and reunited it with his body!

We then proceeded to pass through Kentsford Farm and then cross the line of the West Somerset Railway, unfortunately for the railway buffs in our group the steam trains are not running at this time of year. Heading towards the coast we had our banana break in the fields of a holiday park overlooking the Bristol Channel. We were lucky enough to witness two mad march hares acting exactly like that - mad. We followed the England Coast Path



towards Blue Anchor where we diverted inland. We stopped to admire Binham Grange, a wonderful 5-bedroom Jacobean house with fantastic gardens. It transpires that it is currently

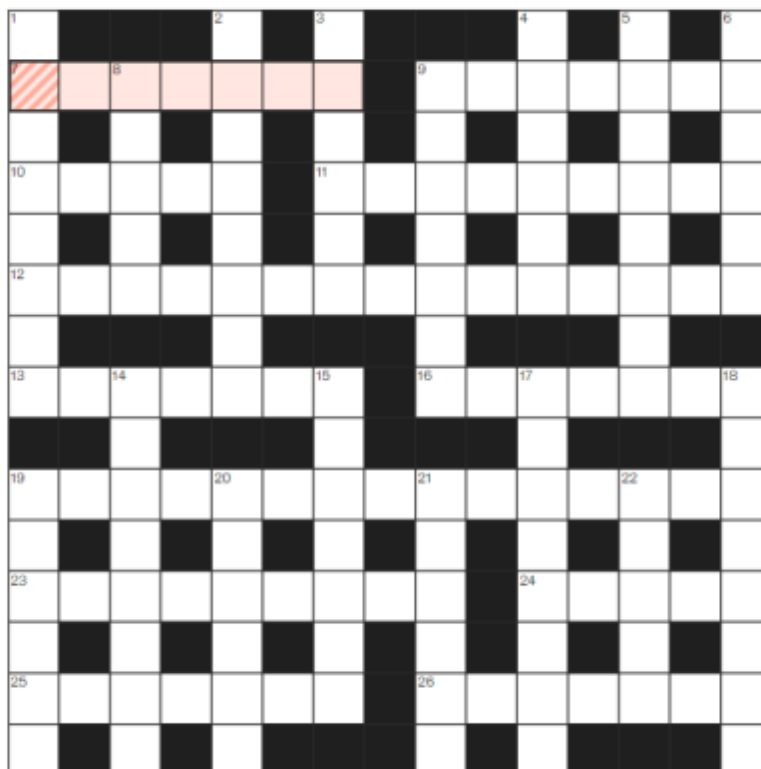
up for sale as part of a 275 acre dairy farm if you are interested and your pockets allow. At Old Cleeve we stopped at the village hall for our lunch break. A great place to stop as picnic benches and assorted chairs were most welcome to enjoy our picnic in the spring sunshine. Bilbrook was our next destination before descending into Washford. We then followed the railway path passing Bye Farm before returning to St Decumans. A debrief at The Raleghs Cross Inn rounded off a very enjoyable trek.

The April Trek will be led by Tony K and starts at Dunkeswell Airfield carpark (no charge), grid ref ST139079, turn right when you get to the airfield coming from Hemyock. We'll walk through Dunkeswell, along paths to Bowerhayes, Higher Markham, and Gorwell Farms, then on to Madford and Dunkeswell Abbey. We head uphill, to pass by Trickey;s Farm, and via Hayne Cross to Bodmiscombe. Then uphill once more to Sheldon and back to the Airfield. The walk is about 10.8 miles, with about 1500 feet of ascent.

It is with great sadness that I pass on the news that Ben Mayo passed away on 9th March. Ben was a trekker of legend, and it was him that set up the long trek group and established its ethos of a longish walk across the more remote, less walked parts of our area, embracing good conversations, friendship and a debrief in a convivial pub afterwards. He led the group for about 15 years before I tried to take up the reigns post Covid. -- Gordon

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

Cryptic Crossword #44: April 2025 (Solution at the end of this newsletter)



Across

- 7 Confine in wooden closet (7)
- 9 A superior house not outside the bad guy (7)
- 10 Held up and kept cold (2,3)
- 11 Shove head of committee into baby carriage (9)
- 12 I don't believe it; it's got bells on (4,3,5,3)
- 13 Route planner or GPS? (4,3)
- 16 Alerted! Altered, as the story goes (7)
- 19 A full account of text from the Bible 7,3,5)
- 23 On the way to Artistic Inn but not in charge (2,7)
- 24 Dog who wanders (5)
- 25 Not worth bothering about this kind of hunt! (7)
- 26 Chemical-free music maker in charge (7)

Down

- 1 Good literally, but bad metaphorically (5,3)
- 2 Hesitation after a brief period of time, but keeps going (8)
- 3 Shirley joins the Skulls group (6)
- 4 Some cyclo-cheat has a tifter like a helmet (6)
- 5 Lounger for a couch potato (8)
- 6 International organisation correct, but maybe not so? (6)
- 8 The epic hill included some iciness (5)
- 9 The guest is a bit visible on a hilltop (7)
- 14 A blind crepuscular creature initially toiling on in response to the killing shed (8)
- 15 Soar over Alp with sun protection (7)
- 17 A powerful clout makes even glares lose directions (8)
- 18 Wealthy after weight-loss. That's Marlene! (8)
- 19 Block print from Nietzsche has points missing (6)
- 20 Mess about on a crag? It could be very sad (6)
- 21 Hypothesis of the negatively-charged atom (6)
- 22 Rave now to find a corvus corax without pain (5)

