

Tiverton u3a Newsletter

learn, laugh, live

Volume 10 Issue 7

June / July
2025



GENERAL MEETING
Thursday 26th June, 2025 - 10.00 for 10.30am

**Mick Harrison, Cyber Protect Officer
Devon and Cornwall Police**

Helping us to raise awareness - and measures we can take to help ourselves from falling victims to cyber crime

Tea coffee and biscuits, will be served before the meeting starts

After Mick's talk we will enjoy our 35th birthday celebrations, with our buffet lunch

Moorhayes Community Centre, Lea Road, Tiverton EX16 6SU

And for our next meeting.....

Thursday, 24th July

Magnificent Women and Flying Machines

Speaker: Sally Smith

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

Tiverton u3a welcomes six new members this month

Meemee Overton

Janet Jackson

Lloyd Hughes

Jean Scott

Susan Booker

Janet Smith

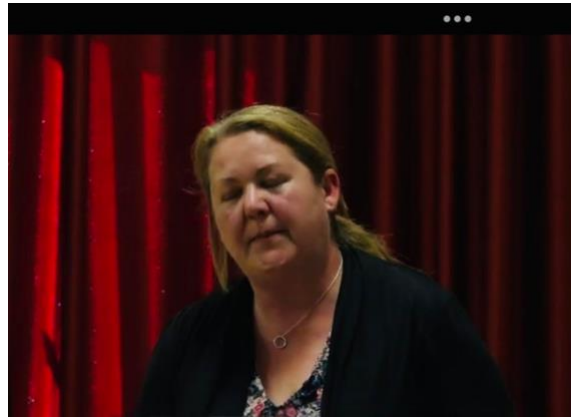
FROM THE COMMITTEE

May Meeting

Tax, Care and Toyboys. Sarah Hargreaves

Sarah Hargreaves, solicitor and estate planning consultant, delivered a timely and thought-provoking talk on how we may all best prepare and protect ourselves and our beneficiaries. The essence of the talk was protection of one's assets in order that we and our families don't lose out in the future.

Preparation of a Will, mitigation of the impact of Inheritance Tax and avoidance of sideways disinheritance were among the topics covered. Sarah emphasised especially the benefits of a Trust Will in protecting assets for the surviving partner and beneficiaries by establishing a "Trust" to manage and distribute assets for their benefit and, by the way, discourage the attention of "toyboys". This presentation was an invaluable reminder about preparation, protection and planning. – *Mike Warren*



If you missed the talk, or would like to hear it again, it can be downloaded from the following link

https://youtu.be/8IYGJXK_Byg

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>

To mark our 35th Anniversary, our chairman has produced a short history

Tiverton u3a – The First 35 Years

A short article published in the Tiverton Gazette in November 1989 posed the question about forming a University of the Third Age Group for retired people in Tiverton. A telephone number was supplied and one Nesta Natrass of Tiverton duly rang the number and spoke with a Mrs Gwen Holmes to seek more detail. To allay the fears of Nesta that perhaps this project was slightly too cerebral, Mrs Holmes reassured her that the word "University" was not restricted to those with paper qualifications but was simply a term to convey ongoing learning for those of retirement age. On January 25th 1990, the first meeting of Tiverton u3a was held at the Racehorse Inn, Westexe, Tiverton and some 10 ladies turned up to confirm their interest and commitment. The volunteer committee comprised: Chair: Muriel Blinman; Hon Secretary: Nesta Natrass; Treasurer: Sheila Armstrong; Committee: Peggy Holman.

In fact, the origins of u3a are to be found in 1972 in Toulouse in France; the "third age" was defined "as the period of life when one ceases all professional activity", when men and women have the

freedom to choose what to do. Slowly and surely, the idea spread to the UK and, by 1981 a group of three academics at Trinity College, Cambridge, established the first University of the Third Age in the UK. It may be of slight interest to note that one of these three academics, Michael Young, was the man behind the Open University, hence contributing enormously to ongoing learning for many thousands of people of all ages. Another of the three, Eric Midwinter, wrote in a defining document, "There is the special pleasure of belonging to a highly prestigious and successful organisation, a cog, in turn, of the global rotary of u3as, that is satisfying feeling of playing a part in a world-wide movement of such resolute purpose."

Back to Tiverton; the message was spread by word of mouth and the first monthly meeting took place on Thursday 22 nd March and critically several special interest groups were also formed, including "Water painting" and "Current Affairs". Membership grew and, by the June committee meeting, confidence was such that Nesta Natrass sent a letter to the Tiverton Gazette, published 11 th September 1990, to promote the fledgling organisation:

"Sir, May I through your paper, introduce your readers to a new group that is now active in Tiverton. The Tiverton Third Age Group has been formed for people who are aged 50 or over, retired and wanting to learn new skills or pass on expertise that they have accumulated over the years, to other members. Already an art group and a ramblers group are enthusiastically supported, we hope to start a play-reading and a theatre group (for theatre visits). As membership increases so, we hope, will the range of activities that can be introduced. Our success will depend on having a membership with widely varying interests, talents and ideas for creative, educational and leisure activities. Members meet on the fourth Thursday of the month a local inn for lunch, which is preceded by a guest speaker. If you would like more details, please ring me on Tiverton....

Nesta Natrass

Hon Secretary

Tiverton Third Age Group"

This considerable effort led to a further growth in membership and the formation of several more specialist groups. One significant constant is the "fourth Thursday" for meetings but one major departure was the emphasis on "lunch preceded by a guest speaker."

Minutes of the first AGM dated 24 th January 1991 reveal 30 paid-up members, a bank balance of £64.94, subscription of £6 per member and a new committee elected, this time comprising 5 women. New groups comprised Art, Ramblers and Bridge. In March 1991 Tiverton u3a was enrolled as Group-member of the Third Age Trust. By the mid-1990s, men seem to be more in evidence with names such as Fred Haskell, Gordon Payne, Gordon Hemmings and John Lawson putting in an appearance but ladies, including Dot Bending, Joyce Melhuish, Gwen Durrant and Florence Gynn clearly appear to be in key positions within the organisation. The Minutes of the AGM held on 27 th January 1994 reveal the Group Co-ordinator's Report referring to groups including Art, Bridge, Discussion, Literary, Music Appreciation, Rambling, Theatre and Travel.

By 23 rd January 1997 the AGM Report adds Ambling, Autobiography, French Conversation, Gardening, Play Reading, Quilting and Patchwork and Scrabble. Venue changes also appeared to be necessary because membership numbers outgrew the Racehorse Inn facilities and so came the era of the Tiverton Hotel and, briefly, the Hartnoll Hotel. The 100-membership landmark was attained in 1998 and, also, in that year 15 members visited the European Parliament

In 2000, a piece in the Mid Devon Gazette featured a photograph of the then Chairman, Geoffrey Mallett, handing over a cheque for £350, along with 35 books, to the Tiverton High School Head, Katrina Borowski, on behalf of Tiverton u3a as part of its millennium project. Also, in 2000, Tiverton u3a became a registered charity. A benefit of gaining this status is noted in a letter dated 2 nd November 2000 from Geoffrey Mallett to Committee members: "One immediate benefit to us is a reduction from £4.50 to £2.50 per hour for hiring the committee room, computer room or a classroom at the Old Heathcoat Community Centre."

Financial matters were also convincingly evident in the Treasurer's report for 2001 which stated that "The principle factor has been the securing of a Lottery Grant of £1,799 for the purchase of new audio/visual equipment and a laser printer. We are very grateful to Stewart Hicks for managing the successful application to the Lottery."

A Special General Meeting held on 5 th September considered switching meetings to a new venue, St Paul's Rooms, but a rental of £2,400 p.a. with additional heating and lighting costs of £600 p.a., together with a litany of critical questions convinced 49 out of 52 members not to make the move. By 2004, the list of special interest groups had reached 20, now including Computer group, Croquet,

Family history, French conversation, Garden group, Keep fit, Local history, Mah Jongg, Natural history, Personal finance and the Theatre group. I also note from a personal perspective, names that I recognise as current or relatively recent members – John Smith, Ian Kimber, David Pegg, Carol Dapp, Margaret Mayo, Valerie Pocock and the Thrall duo.

Membership by 2013 was 360 and group activities now extended to Opera, Wine appreciation, Geology, American history, Table tennis, Cribbage, Snooker and Country music. Committee meetings in the mid-2010s appear to have been more entertaining than those of 2025; minutes of the meeting of 22 nd May 2014 states items for sale had been brought to the notice of the Committee, including “Firstly, a local cabaret artiste has an item of underwear for sale, size 40C, and I am advised that the only reason for the sale is that the purchased item, which is good as new, is the wrong size. If any lady is interested, utmost discretion is assured if you speak to me after the meeting.” and “Secondly, and I hope this does not offend those of a more delicate nature, but, Home Fayre, the shop that takes up half of Gold Street is now the stockist of Designer Toilet Rolls. I will add nothing more to that statement except to say that it is perfectly true, and disbelievers are, of course, perfectly at liberty to see for themselves.”

And so today, 300 members, 28 special interest groups; groups catering for thinking, exercising and socialising. It is evident that some groups remain throughout and others remain for a while, probably as much as anything because of the resident skills available at the time. I would also note that during the life of our enterprising u3a, two more such groups have commenced nearby, thus confirming the need for and role of u3a. Indeed, I believe that throughout the UK, 1,000 u3as with combined membership of 400,000, are today actively putting into practice the ideas of 1972, 1981 and 1990.

It is obvious from reading the minutes of early meetings that enthusiasm levels were high and most of the hard work in designing the product has been beneficial to the shape of the Group as it exists today. To paraphrase Sir Isaac Newton, for those of us who currently take some responsibility for Tiverton u3a, “it is by standing on the shoulders of giants”.

And, finally, three matters of a personal nature I need to emphasise in order to illustrate my indebtedness to others and my own deficiencies:

- Firstly, the commencement of this brief history was initiated by a name in the first and succeeding paragraphs of this piece, Nesta Natrass, who was there at the start and is here again now stressing and confirming this living history. Our sincere thanks to Nesta.
- Secondly, I have referred to various names at points where I thought it relevant to illustrate significant matters and events. I apologise to those who also played their part but who I have failed to mention. There are hundreds of people who have featured in AGMs, Committees and group activities and any failure to mention them is through the sheer volume of words, nothing more.
- I am indebted to the past committee members who have retained and filed the documents that I have quoted, especially the various AGMs, and I am ashamed to say that my filing system falls well short of theirs, but, having seen their efforts, I will try to do better.

Here's to the next 35 years!

Mike Warren

Publicity

On 20th June, Tiverton u3a mounted a day-long exhibition adjacent to the Pannier Market. Other stall holders said it was relatively busy for a Friday and we did speak to over 30 people by the end of the session. One of whom, the District Council chair wanted to join us next week for the meeting and lunch, although afterwards he realised that he ought to double check his diary! Nevertheless, the day was considered a success and hopefully will result in attracting a few new members.

Thank you, Maggie, for organising and setting up the stall



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 on the 4th Wednesday of the month, in a member's home in Tiverton. Next meeting: 25th June 2025. New members: please contact co-ordinator for meeting address as we've reverted to meeting at home. At May's meeting we had some Agatha Christie-like murders in a story which is crying

out to be developed into a novel; a short story about 4 women turning up at a man's funeral; a fascinating tale about a Neanderthal child; a vividly descriptive poem called 'Coastal Path' and an autobiographical essay called 'Colours' about working with visually impaired learners. We also revisited Haiku and some of these are shown below, which we hope you enjoy. (Haiku is a Japanese verse form consisting of 3 lines, follows a 5-7-5 syllable format, doesn't need to rhyme, but beware, it can become addictive!): - *Heather*

noisy rooks debate
their dilemmas in full voice
mimicking MPs

brisk breeze and sunshine
perfect wash-day recipe
for dancing trousers

withering flowers
soak up the gentle rain for
magical face-lifts

random sparks flow through
my head with bones to build a
skeleton story

snowflakes float and swirl
in a joyful dance before
soft kissing the earth

The road bends. Who knows
what lies ahead? Maybe just
Flowers and bird song.

Willow softly sways
Dreams flow through sinuous fronds
Cool water brings peace

Two handsome, strutting
magpies, smart in black and white.
Hope they bring me luck



Cryptic Crosswords Coordinator: Graeme Cozens

Enjoy this month's cryptic crossword. It contains an abundance of anagrams, a wealth

of wordplay and we hope you find it fun.

PS this month we welcome a new mystery contributor who attended my "How to Solve Cryptic Crosswords" workshop. She joins all the other mystery compilers!

Graeme. COZENSG@YAHOO.CO.UK



Croquet

Coordinator:
Wendy Bond

Our croquet enthusiasts continue to meet weekly for our fun afternoon playing croquet.

We always welcome new members, no experience needed. Equipment is available. Sessions cost £5 and we meet at Heathcoat Cricket Club Tuesday afternoons 2 to 4.30pm.

A couple of changes for your diaries.

Please note on 29th July our start time will be 2.30 as there is a cricket camp booked that day and we will meet on Wednesday 20th August instead of the Tuesday that week.

There seemed to be little interest in the offer of a friendly match against Exeter croquet club. I have now been approached by Wellington U3A croquet group. Would anyone be interested in me saying we would like to have a match with them?

Please contact Sandra e.richardson@sky.com or me wendycbond@btinternet.com - Wendy



Economics

Coordinator:
Mike Barlow

We had an interesting session in May where we reviewed a number of key economic indicators as usual.

Eunice led a good discussion about whether the average pay was better in the Public or Private sector. Despite accurate data being hard to come by it appears that taking into account pay,

bonuses and pension contributions that the Public sector comes out on top. We felt that there were various other factors that would make the private sector more attractive especially for specific groups of people such as recent graduates.

Our next meeting will be at Eunice's house at 10am on Wed 4th June.

Contact mikeandsue.barlow@gmail.com if you'd like to join us. ~ Mike Barlow



Board Games

Coordinator:
Dawn Ferguson

The proposal is to get together monthly on a Friday or a Saturday evening, (or possibly a Thursday) arriving from 7pm for a "kick off" with the dice at 7.30pm for a couple of hours.

A selection of different board games to be played over time, but focused on one game

for the evening, with a run through and then a game. No previous experience necessary just a willingness to join in and have a go. Some games will be played as an individual whilst others would be in a team. (No Monopoly or Risk as we only have a couple of hours and want to leave as friends). I propose we take turns to host the evening, or hire somewhere small if necessary or preferred. First few sessions in Tiverton. Bring your slippers or style it in socks. Tea and coffee provided. If this sounds like something you would enjoy, please get in touch.

Please register your interest with Dawn and your evening availability/preference.

Email Ferguson.dawn67@gmail.com



Gardens

**Coordinator:
Margaret Chumbley**

After our visit to High Garden Rosalie wrote "Having been a customer of this man from his early days at Withleigh and then Kenton, and knowing his penchant for the unusual, this garden did not disappoint." Others wrote "High Garden certainly deserves high praise. A stunning array of mixed borders and mixed beds - who would have thought catmint and purple sweet peas would make such good bed fellows. High praise also for the excellent value for money of the plants on sale. An all-round worthwhile visit."

Broadclyst Flower Festival with guest speaker Caradoc Day "Plant Hunters and Pioneers". "An uplifting visit with inspirational talk on historical plant hunters, particularly Veitch and Lobb, whose far flung journeys enabled such amazing discoveries which influence our gardens today, and a stunning church packed full of floral displays ranging from pretty floral dresses to the impact of simple Japanese inspired "



In July we have three great visits; Hestercombe, Coleton Fishacre and Nynehead Court. Contact me if interested. - *Margaret*



German Conversation

**Coordinator:
John Smith.**

We have continued to meet every two weeks but our schedule (first and third Mondays) has been disrupted by a plethora of Bank Holidays. We continue to amuse ourselves with German jokes (or English jokes in German), to surprise ourselves with the way in which the Germans express familiar idioms and to inform ourselves with little-known facts about Germany and German. We then talk

about our recent experiences and activities (auf Deutsch of course) and any other topic which may surface in our discussions. - *John*



Going Places

**Coordinators:
John O'Connor
Tony Lowe, Chris Steele**

Visit to the RNLI Training College

We were delighted to have a full group of 30 members join us for our recent excursion to the RNLI Training College in Poole — the heart of training for the Royal National Lifeboat Institution. Set in a beautiful

waterside location, the College is an impressive, modern venue that also offers hotel facilities and conference spaces.

Our visit began with a hearty lunch at the Riggers Restaurant, setting the tone for the rest of the day. Afterwards, we split into three smaller groups for guided tours led by knowledgeable and enthusiastic guides. They shared fascinating insights into the RNLI's history, rigorous training programmes, and the vital role that public funding plays in supporting the organisation.

Highlights of the tour included the impressive engineering workshops and the state-of-the-art training pool, complete with wave machines and thunderstorm effects to simulate real-life rescue conditions. We also had the chance to experience the Severn class lifeboat simulator — so realistic, in fact, that it left some of us feeling a little queasy!

All in all, it was a thoroughly enjoyable and informative day at one of the UK's most prestigious training locations - *Tony*



Combe Martin Silver Mine

We are planning a visit to the Combe Martin Silver mine 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.

Heritage Days

Additionally, to coincide with the Heritage Days festival we are planning a visit to Arlington Court. This event will take place on Sunday 21 st September, and will be free. Arlington court is home to the National carriage collection and is well worth visiting. Suggest members meet outside the carriage collection at 2:30pm and will be self-led tour format. There are normally staff on hand, if you have any questions This trip will be very informal, car shares to be organised between members. I will be emailing the membership to establish who will be going a little nearer the time,
- *John*

Mayflower Water Treatment Works

We're looking for expressions of interest in a potential visit to the Mayflower Water Treatment Works at Roborough, near Plymouth later this year.

Opened in 2020, Mayflower is a state-of-the-art facility that supplies high-quality drinking water to around 250,000 people in Plymouth and the surrounding area. It uses advanced, sustainable treatment processes designed to outperform traditional water treatment methods. Visitor numbers will be strictly limited, and places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

Please note: This is a working industrial site with high noise levels, multiple staircases, and no lift access. Unfortunately, it is not suitable for individuals with mobility difficulties. If you're interested in joining the visit, please get in touch – Tony.lowe.tony@yahoo.co.uk

SS Great Britain and Bristol Harbourside

Postponed until next spring.



Trad Jazz
Coordinator:
Mike Barlow

A fantastic evening of live jazz on the third Wednesday of the month as Gordon's Algiers Strutters returned to Magelake Pavilion for another foot-tapping night of New Orleans and Traditional Jazz. The evening's top-class line-up featured Dave Martin (trumpet), Terry Williams (trombone),

Nick White (clarinet/reeds), John Noddings (banjo), Colin Fulcher (bass), and Andy Mayes (drums). A superb mix of talent ready to transport you straight to the heart of the jazz scene. A great evening was had by all and you can find more info about Gordon's Algiers Strutters on Facebook. ~ Angie

There was an also excellent evening at Langford Budville with the Richard Leach Street Band who are pictured here. Their drummer will be leading the next session to play there in July with Spats Langham (banjo) Jon Penn (piano) and John Maddocks (woodwind) completing the group. ~ Mike



Next month's offerings are:

Wed 9th July Nick Ward's Jelly Roll Quartet at Langford Budville

Wed 16th July Spirit of the Blues at Uffculme contact gordonsjazzclub@hotmail.com for seat reservations

Let me know if you need more information. mikeandsue.barlow@gmail.com ~ Mike Barlow



Line Dancing
Coordinator:
Mich Bowers

Next session will be on 23rd June, hopefully we will be able to find some slow dances in case of heatwave!!!

the following sessions are 14th and 28th July.
Mich



Local Theatre
Coordinator:
Betty Thrall

The next block booking is Tiverton Operatic production of "THE WEDDING SINGER" - 7.30 pm New Hal. Tickets £11 each can be paid by cash or card to the Treasurer or cheque made payable to Tiverton u3a., There will be a form to put your names on at this monthly meeting.

SYNOPSIS

Its a story about a Wedding Singer who sings at wedding venues. He is also about to get married, but something goes wrong. There is an attraction between him and a waitress who is also engaged to an up-and-coming business tycoon. The story centres on the unfolding relationship between them. There are other sub stories about other characters within the group. Please do support this talented and successful group and enjoy a musical evening . -

Betty 01884 242998



Photography

Coordinator:
Roger Gunn

The June Photography Group Meeting was attended by Sue and Mike, Tim, Nigel, Roger and Phil. Thanks to Roger for hosting and single handedly supplying the coffee and biscuits.

We had all visited Exeter Quay for the May meeting and this was the opportunity to share the multitude of pictures we took. I think it is fair to say the area is very photogenic and between us we managed to find plenty of different things to photograph. There were numerous examples of the various attractive views of The Quay itself, from the old historic wharf-side buildings, no longer storing cargoes but converted into shops, cafes, workshops, offices and apartments to the watery scenes of the river and canal and the surrounding varied landscape. The Customs House and climbing wall were popular images but there were many different shots of graffiti, the wildlife, the bridges, lots of nautical stuff from canoes to ships canons, the remains of a railway turntable, unusual items in windows, rusty flowers, a 'ghost sign' and of course, the pubs!



Some of the group ventured away from the Quay to record images of the Cathedral and the ancient and architecturally rich surrounding area (and the posh shops and restaurant).

By way of a slight contrast, Phil also showed his holiday snaps and video clips from Iceland (the country not the well-known discount frozen food store!)

Thanks to Phil for compiling the group reports for another season.

We will be taking our customary summer break so the next meeting will be at 10am on Thursday 9th October. Venue to be decided at a later date. Focus for that meeting will be anything that you snap during the summer.

- Phil

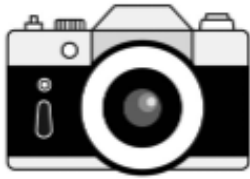


Photography 2

Coordinator:
Charlie Duke

The subject for June was individual visits to Topsham, trying to include interesting and quirky items. This provided views of the Exe at high and low tides, birds feeding in the mud, interesting house signs and features.

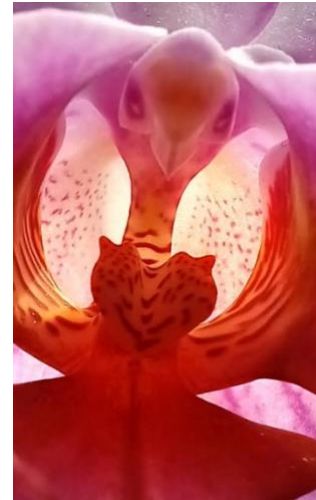
One image showed a building with different brickwork styles on ground and first floors, indicating the original single storey structure had been extended upwards at a later date. A property called William of Orange House recalls the landing and stay of the eventual King William III in the 1600's. A lot of houses had flood defences at entrances, indicating a rise in sea levels since they were built. Also interesting was the presence of black swans on the foreshore which have presumably migrated up from Dawlish. An interesting place to visit. - Charlie



Exploring Photography

Coordinator:
Philip Skinner

This is a new group. We have decided on the name: Exploring



Photography. Bio: An informal, friendly and supportive group trying to master a range of digital camera skills such as taking more creative photos and learning how to edit and enhance our photos.

Our first meeting was just getting to know what the members wanted to achieve with the group deciding the name. Chatting about the cameras including mobile phones which have a very good camera on them now. I hope you will find this useful.

– Phili



Railway Group

Coordinator:
Jose Kimber

We were joined by a couple of other U3A members for our visit to the South Devon Railway on 16 May. We were blessed with lovely weather and enjoyed a pleasant train ride from Tiverton Parkway to Totnes. We then had a short walk

along the riverside to Totnes Riverside where we travelled on the South Devon Railway to Buckfastleigh. We had time for lunch in the cafe there and a look round Buckfastleigh station and the museum. Sadly, this time we were unable to visit the locomotive works as they are too busy. We caught the train back to Totnes Riverside and walked back to Totnes with time for an ice cream before catching the train back to Tiverton Parkway. Everything worked perfectly and it was a very enjoyable day (but a pity about the workshop!)



For our June Meeting we were originally planning to visit the East Somerset Railway, but in the end there were only two of us able to go, so we will now meet on on **Friday 26th June at 10.30am**. We are now down to a regular group of six, but three are away for the June meeting so we will be a very small, select group! We will be meeting at my house, 5 Cudmore Park, EX16 4QJ if anyone else would like to attend. We will be continuing to watch the Railways at War series.

Our July meeting will take place as usual on **Friday 25 July at 10.30am**, venue to be confirmed.

We still welcome new members to our group, please contact me if you would like to join us - Jose



Ramblers
Coordinator:
Jenny Bedford

Nigel led an invigorating ramble up hill and down dale through the bustling metropolis that is Bampton and around the surrounding rolling countryside.

It was one of those days when decisions had to be made concerning appropriate clothing, due to the vagaries of the Devon weather. High heels, slingbacks or wellies? The shimmering, sleek, off the shoulder

number with diamond encrusted tiara or trench-coat and sou'wester? Fortunately for the other fourteen participants I chose coat, hat and wellies!

Within minutes of starting we got to see where our taxpayer pounds are being spent. On, probably, one of the least used roads in the area, which had recently been resurfaced. No longer was there a grass verge running down the MIDDLE of the narrow lane. The rest of Bampton's roads were also about to receive a makeover judging by the number of signs littering our route.

The panoramic view from the top of Higher Bowbier Hill was definitely worth the effort of the climb. The route down was attractive too past the beautifully renovated (formerly derelict) farm buildings and through the ancient coppiced beech driveway. We all survived the 150m section of the A396 back to the Exeter Inn where the convivial debrief was conducted al fresco, with the umbrella up to shield us from the sun and the rain.

Many thanks Nigel for another great ramble. – *Phil*

The next Ramble is on the 8th July and will be led by Penny.

We will start from the small parking area for the Rhododendron/Knowles woods on the Sheldon Road (map ref ST 0953 0691, nearest post code EX15 2EU, What 3 words – smoothly.eternity.sundial), The walk will follow the path through the woods to Blackborough Common before going down through Newcombe Common, Downlands Plantations and returning to the start via Forest Glade. Approx. 4 to 5 miles. – Jenny



Skittles
Coordinator:
Janet Loader

We meet again in October. Please contact Janet on 01884 252116 if you would like to learn more. – *Janet Loader*



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 newly formed Short Tennis group continues to meet at Uplowman Village Hall every Friday morning from 10 - 11.30 am. We have a small band of enthusiastic players but would welcome others who would like to join us and have the option to extend to a 2 hour session if demand

required it. Currently we charge £2.50 per session to cover Hall hire and refreshments.

If anyone is interested in finding out more then please contact Di Lewis on 01884 821329 or 07713 311616.



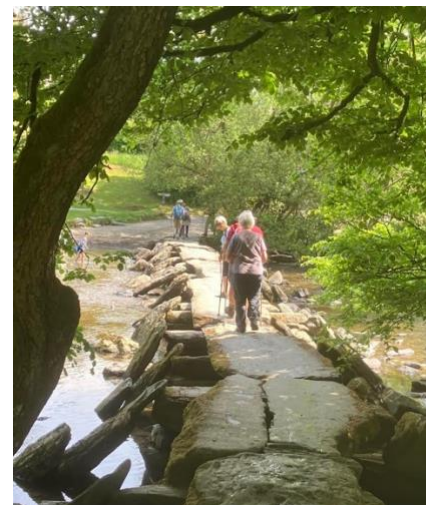
Short Trek

**Coordinator:
Phil Akers**

The May Short Trek was led by Andrea and started from Withypool. We were immediately into a steepish climb over the flank of Withypool Hill, following the Exe Valley Way, which led us over fields, gradually descending into the Barle Valley

at Tarr Steps. Crossing the river on the ancient clapper bridge brought us to a delightful picnic site for lunch. Everyone resisted the lure of the adjacent pub, but several succumbed to the delights of the ice cream vendor.

We then followed the Barle upstream, crossing the river twice. The second bridge has been recently constructed and featured many brass plaques, mostly with "in memoriam" inscriptions. Crossing through riverside meadows and woodlands, we arrived back in Withypool to indulge in a second round of ice creams. The traditional debrief session was held in the Anchor Inn at Exebridge.



Thanks, Andrea, for a delightful walk. - *Nigel*



Our next short trek will be on Friday 27th June and start in the National Trust car park at Arlington Court. If you are a National Trust member, remember to bring your membership card for 'free' parking.

After leaving the car park, we'll head downhill across open fields to Winford Bridge, then follow the valley up to Cleave Cottage. From there, it's a steady climb to Coombeshead via Barton Court before descending to Loxhore Lodge and returning along the River Yeo valley. Along the way, we'll stop to explore the lake, bird hide, and The Wilderness, before relaxing by the main lily pond for lunch - weather permitting!

This is a scenic walk of approximately 6 miles around the wider Arlington estate, with a few hills but nothing too strenuous. Please bring a packed lunch. Start time: 10am.
- Tony



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 met to challenge our perceptions of British society, we were helped to do this by a Ukrainian guest, Anna, who works as an interpreter for the NHS. She told us that Ukrainians were surprised that we were prepared to wait 18 weeks for a doctor's appointment. So much for the world beating NHS. However, when asked about funding she told us that Ukrainians paid so perhaps finance is the key issue.

Anna described how families in Ukraine have collective responsibility which is good in that it's supportive but negative in that it limits choice for younger people. She sees our society as having much more freedom to choose one's own life and more state and community support.

Our next meeting will continue this theme by looking at the world wide Refugee situation It will be on July 17 at 2pm. Further details

– Eunice. EuniceHinds@gmail.com



Thursday Lunch

Coordinator:
Angie Cheshire

Nineteen members braved the elements to have lunch at the Beer Engine in Newton St Cyres near Exeter.

The Beer Engine is Devon's oldest working brew pub and housed in a 19th century coaching inn. The pub brews its

own ales with five varieties usually available, including two ales and three seasonal ales.

We all enjoyed our lunch, the menu being a little more adventurous than the standard pub fare. Although we did not have to pre-order, the food was served efficiently by very friendly staff.

At the end of the meal there was an opportunity to tour the brewery situated in the basement and to ask questions of the brewmaster, who has been running the brewery since it began in 1983.

~ Gina & Mike



Our next outing is to The Culm Valley Inn, organised by Wendy and Peter. Email me if you would like to attend.

Angie. angelacheshire@hotmail.com



Trekking

Coordinator:
Gordon Cleaver

The JuneTrek

Seven intrepid trekkers enjoyed a lovely 11-mile route on Dartmoor starting and finishing at the Warren House Inn near Postbridge. This was a varied route of moorland, tors and streams ably led by Gordon. The initial prospects didn't look good as the trekkers assembled at the pub car park, the tors appearing and then disappearing in the mist and morning rain.

However, once we started the rain stopped and the

mist magically disappeared resulting in fantastic clear views.

We first headed to the old Vitifer Tin Mine complex. Dating from medieval times this was once the largest tin mine on Dartmoor with an 11-metre water wheel for pumping water out of the mine. Many interesting building ruins and artefacts remain. We continued up to the top of Birch Tor before dropping back down to Bennetts Cross. Dating from the early 1700's this cross has the letters WB inscribed which stands for Warren Bounds marking the boundary for supplying rabbit meat to the tanners at Vitifer mine. We continued down passing several stone rows, standing stones and hut circles onto Fernworthy Reservoir. This was a lovely place to stop for our banana break. Onwards then up through Fernworthy Forest to Fernworthy Stone Circle. Thought to date back 4000 years the 27 granite stones in the 20-metre circle are thought to be for a bronze age funeral pyre or maybe feasting.



We then dropped down to the North Teign River where a beautiful clapper bridge was the perfect stop for lunch. It was then back uphill to Sittaford Tor with glorious far-reaching views. Once over the top it was a gentle traverse back to our start point being serenaded by a cuckoo in the distance.

A debrief followed at the Warren House Inn, regarded as the highest (and loneliest) pub in Southern England. The roaring fire was most welcome which legend has it has been burning continuously since 1845. - *Kelvin*

July Long Trek

Thursday 3rd July 2025 – 10.00 AM , Dunkery Gate Parking Area The Trek will be led by Roger. Starting from Dunkery Gate Parking Area (Grid SS895 406) we will then head outwards to Spangate Cross and Lane and then on to Wootton Courtney, Brockwell and Luccombe. We then make our way up to Webbers Post and up to Dunkery Beacon before dropping back down to the cars. A trek of just under 10 miles with an elevation of 2265 feet

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



Our visit on Wednesday 4th June to the Black Venus presented us with excellent food once again. However, when we arrived no menus were available and the reply was, they are just being printed off, which often means there has been a price increase. And oh my, some said, others were more vocal, as the menu prices were viewed with a substantial increase.

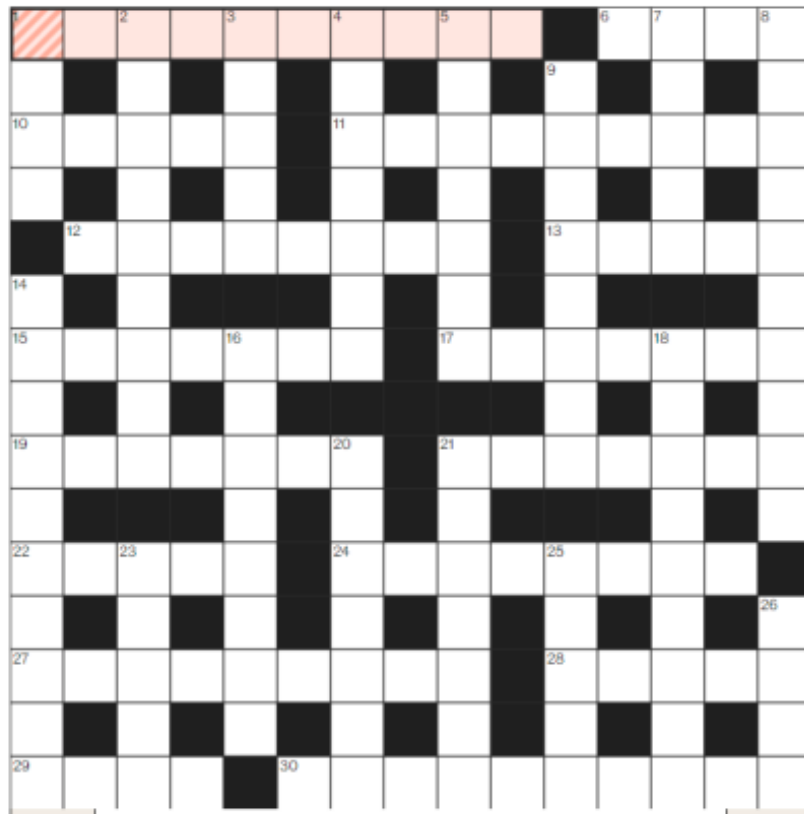
Where are the prices not increasing? but here the food is so good, and I believe enjoyed by all.

We are trying a new venture on the 2nd of July to Tom Cobley Tavern a traditional public house dating back to the 14th century nestled in the quiet pretty country village of Spreyton, it's just the other side of Crediton. If you did not put your name down at the Black Venus and would like to attend, please contact me ASAP.

- *Trevor*



Cryptic Crossword #47: July 2025 (Solution at the end of this newsletter)



Across

- 1 Last of trio ensures, it seems, the group's performance (5,5)
- 6 Maybe spurn the mixed buns, not nice (4)
- 10 Spanish snack bungled in Bologna (5)
- 11 Guardian of the law is a slightly changed civil male (9)
- 12 If things are in this, they are all over the place (8)
- 13 This river initially is not disputed up stream (5)
- 15 Provide advice – that was a close 'un (7)
- 17 Major land overseas has place for Minnie's adventures (7)
- 19 It's no good. Reduce your consumption! (7)
- 21 Café-worker gives legal advice, I hear (7)
- 22 At first I didn't like energy delivery when at rest (5)
- 24 At Christmas the adverts contain part of a ship (8)
- 27 Sounds like you almost take one down with this martial art! (9)
- 28 The principle of "the hotdog", maybe! (5)
- 29 Short girl and French eating regime (4)
- 30 Impressive upright attracts attention (10)

Down

- 1 Old way to record moorland soil that's been trampled (4)
- 2 There was confusion over the Inuit test at the research facility (9)
- 3 Amarda holds a play that is retracted (5)
- 4 Real app promoting clothes (7)
- 5 Chasing the pack, Santa laughs briefly at the score (5-2)
- 7 Damion, lacking information, became a wanderer (5)
- 8 Moneypenny, perhaps? (10)
- 9 Writer didn't finish school and ended up more unwell! (8)
- 14 Known to inform editor (10)
- 16 Bridge the gap between critical and general care, perhaps (4-4)
- 18 The analogist is longing for something past (9)
- 20 A somewhat narrow training session (7)
- 21 Big woodwind, short low voice, directly (7)
- 23 Yours, m'Belgian lord (5)
- 25 It's hell in the dappled shade! (5)
- 26 Could be a plaster or could play jazz, oompah or even pop! (4)

Groups not reporting this month are shown below. Coordinators details can be found on the web page



Mahjonn
Co|rdinator:
Celia Hicks



Folk Dancing
Coordinators:
John & Hazel Ridd

Cryptic Crossword #47: 2025

