

Tiverton u3a Newsletter

learn, laugh, live

Volume 11 Issue 2

February /
March
2026



GENERAL MEETING

**Thursday 26th February
10:00 for 10:30am**

**“Weather is predictable” how to produce a forecast
By**

Professor Paul Davies

Paul is a world leading expert in operational meteorology and is an internationally recognised expert in the design and delivery of weather prediction systems

Tea coffee and biscuits as usual

Moorhayes Community Centre Lea Road Tiverton EX16 6SU

And for our next meeting.....

On Thursday 26 March - our AGM

**followed by a talk from Janet East about The Trials and Tribulations of
Running a Small Rural Farm with a Bed and Breakfast**

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Committee Members	Richard Truman Tony Jackson	Tivertonu3acommittee1@gmail.com ap_jackson@outlook.com

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

Tiverton u3a welcomes six new members this month

Meri and Walter Black

David and Valerie Graham

Fritz Kraft

Pauline Dunmore

And regrets to announce the deaths of. **John Lepper and Sue Southgate**

FROM THE COMMITTEE

December General Meeting

Magic, Memory and Mischief, courtesy of **Jude Coram**, were the watchwords at our monthly get-together in January. What a talent to deceive he displayed to a packed house of 90. Even at such close quarters it was impossible to identify his modus operandi. He thrived on audience participation and commented that we were one of the most involved and fun groups he had encountered! That's a compliment folks! Graphic designer turned magician and comedian, Jude, you made a miserable January day a delight. And, what followed was a further delight at our Buffet, again prepared by Country Bumpkins. Thanks to them and to Wendy Bond and Sue Robbins for making this all possible ----- *.Mike Warren*

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

<https://youtu.be/F2dkM4PGxiE>



Annual General Meeting

Please note that the March General Meeting will be preceded by our **AGM**. This will include the Chairman's report, the Treasurer's report and appointment of Committee Members. Please make an effort to attend, as we need a quorum of members to pass any resolutions. - *Mike Warren*

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 2026 – a further reminder

It's that time of year again! Subscriptions are due for renewal from 1 st January 2026.

- The membership fee for Full Members is **£10.00** pa per person, and includes an emailed monthly newsletter.
 - The fee for Associate Members is £6.00 pa per person and includes an emailed newsletter. NB: you must be a full member of another u3a.
 - The national magazine Third Age Matters (TAM) at £4.00 p.a.
- The simplest way to renew is on-line.
- Please go to the website: tivertonu3a.u3asite.uk click on the membership tab and follow the links.

There is no need to complete a form if you are already registered and if there are no major changes to your details. If you do wish to complete a form, one can be downloaded from the website, or collected at the next general meeting

Please identify yourself clearly with your payment. (Name, membership number (just click on the link) or first line of address). Don't forget to enter your details in exactly the same format as previously used (i.e.

lower/upper case). If any of your contact details have changed, please update this information too and don't forget to tick the Gift Aid box if you are a tax payer.

Newsletter

Members are encouraged to receive their newsletter by email, which is included in the annual fee. Posted newsletters are available at an additional cost of £25 per year, due to high printing and postal charges. Paper copies of the newsletter may be collected at monthly meetings at a cost of £1.50 per copy.

You do not need your membership number, but if you would like to be reminded, please contact Annie at tivertonu3amembership@gmail.com A bank transfer or PayPal is the simplest method of payment, cheques (payable to Tiverton u3a) and cash are also accepted. And finally, if you pay by standing order or direct debit, please check the amount is correct and make amendments as required. Thank you.

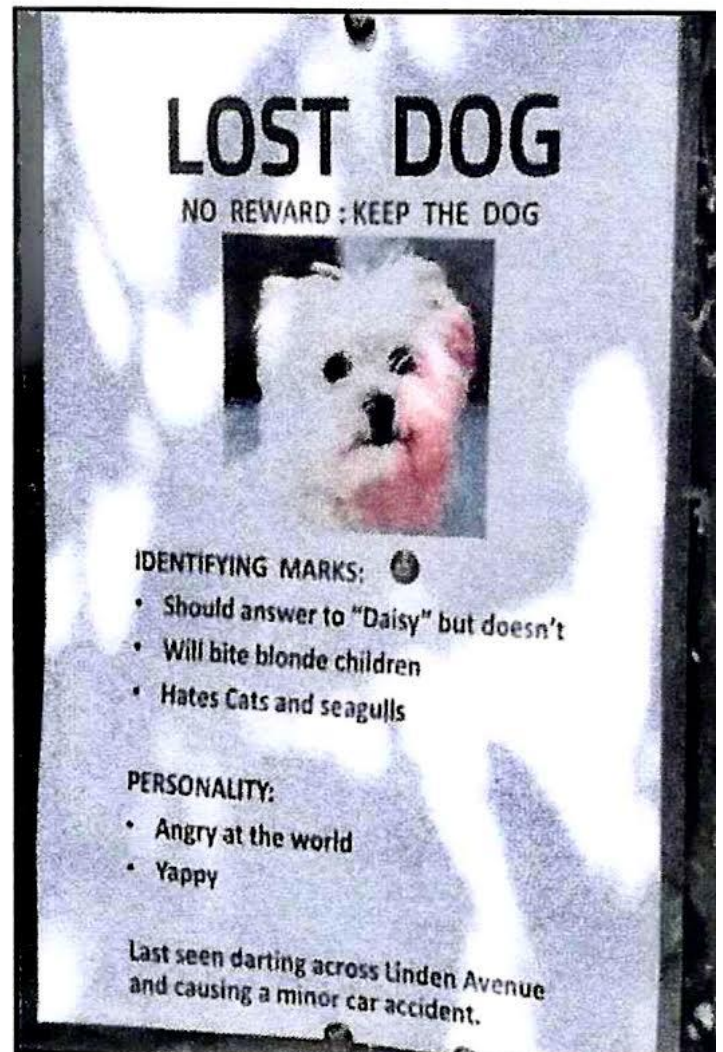
Any queries please contact Annie Foot at tivertonu3amembership@gmail.com tel: 07706 112569, or for technical issues, John O'Connor, Webmaster at tivertonu3awebmaster@gmail.com

Please find below the link to the new edition of u3a Matters Magazine.

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/news/u3a-matters>

This is shortened version of the hard copy magazine

The latest medical at the white House ...



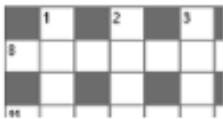
GROUP REPORTS

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*



Croquet
Coordinator:
Wendy Bond

It's time to think about taking out your croquet mallet and giving it a polish in preparation for May time when hopefully everything will be ready to start the croquet season at Heathcoat Cricket Club, Knightshayes. Watch this space over the coming months for future information. *Jean Brown*



Cryptic Crosswords
Coordinator:
Graeme Cozens

How's that NY's resolution going?
How did you do last month? not at all / managed some clues / completed / give me a chance! *

(*please delete as appropriate)

Here's your next opportunity: the cryptic crossword and the solution are included in the newsletter as usual. Hope you have fun cracking those clues!

Graeme. (cozensg@yahoo.co.uk)



Economics
Coordinator:
Mike Barlow

We had the usual interesting discussions in our February meeting, spending a lot of time looking at Unemployment, particularly amongst the 16- to 24-year-olds. The numbers are concerning as there is evidence that if people are unemployed early in their lives that they stand less chance of being employed later on.

We also looked at the leverage Europe has on the USA from selling (or threatening to sell) US based investments such as bonds - since it could have unintended consequences if would need to be done carefully. Gold prices also continue to fascinate as they reflect sentiment rather than value.

Next month we'll meet at Eunice's house on 4th March and review a number of economic indicators. Let me know if you'd like to join us.

Contact mikeandsue.barlow@gmail.com

~ *Mike B*



Folk Dancing

Coordinators:
John & Hazel Ridd

We dance jigs, reels and a waltz, in different formations, and different eras from 17th century to more modern dances. All dances are explained, and the movements are taught, and the fun is fitting the moves to the music.

We always welcome new members, so if you fancy coming along and joining in we will be delighted to see you, (you don't need to bring a partner) -- *John*



Gardens

Coordinator:
Margaret Chumbley

By some minor miracle it was one of the very few dry days since Christmas that twelve members of the Gardens Group visited Forde Abbey, our first garden visit of 2026. On arriving we were greeted with snowdrops lining the drive up to the Abbey, after which we were delighted to discover so much

more than just snowdrops in the garden. There were large swathes of crocuses, with the beautiful intense blue of the Scilla dotted through the borders, hellebores, cyclamen and the occasional early flowering daffodil, all making for a really lovely day out in beautiful spring sunshine.

Remember "To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow"

Margaret



German Conversation

Coordinator:
John Smith.

The Group has met twice during February and has welcomed two new members. We now have 12 members and both meetings were very well attended. As usual we have had our unusual German "word of the week", an unusual German idiom, a German joke (yes- there are some) and a fact about Germany and Germans.

Last time, we heard of an idiom "auf den Leim gegangen" which means "to have gone on the glue". It does not mean what I imagine you think it does. It means "to fall for someone's trick/scam" (sadly a more common phrase these days).

We had a very enjoyable session last time trying to identify German product(s) by their brand and the name of the producer eg Bahlsen (biscuits), Birkenstock (shoes, sandals). - *John*



Going Places

Coordinators:
John O'Connor
Tony Lowe, Chris Steele

Roadford Reservoir

Our visit has been rescheduled to Tuesday 3rd March and will include access to both the dam and the overflow tower. The visit is free of charge but you will need to make your

own way to the site, and car share where possible. Be aware that, due to the number of steps involved, this visit is not suitable for anyone with mobility issues.

I still have a few places available, so if you would like to join us, please get in touch as soon as possible – Tony (lowe.tony@yahoo.co.uk)

SS Great Britain and Bristol Harbourside

We are planning to visit Brunel's SS Great Britain in Bristol docks on Wednesday 15th April. The cost per person which will include transport (coach or minibus depending on numbers), entrance fee and a guided tour is expected to be in the region of £40. If you are interested, please contact - *Chris* (chris.steele.home@btinternet.com)

Burnham-on-Sea Hovercraft Rescue Service

A visit to BARB Search and Rescue is planned in May. Further details to follow shortly.

A visit with tour and lunch at Treguddick Spirit Distillery

Postponed until later this year. - *Tony*



Mahjong

Coordinator:
Celia Hicks

At last something to report.:

Mahjong -. A new group is now in existence, meeting at mutual convenience at a member's home in Tiverton. A fourth member is needed. No experience is necessary, just the ability to drive to the venue in the town and an

interest in the game which we play for fun.

Anyone keen to give it a try should get in touch with me either by email at celiahicks13@gmail.com or phone at 01398 3312101 and I will make the necessary arrangements to suit.

Once upon a time there were 9 groups in Tiverton so it would be good to build up the number again. - *Celia*



Trad Jazz

Coordinator:
Mike Barlow

There was a well attended session with Zoe Lambert's Vintage Jazz Collection in Langford Budville with plenty of well known jazz pieces from the 1920's and 1930's. Gordon's Algiers Strutters were also featured in Uffculme.



March is your opportunity to get out and see some live music:

Wed 11th Mar Jubilee Hall, Langford Budville with Ron King's New Riverside Jazz Band
Wed 18th Mar Magelake Hall, Uffculme with Shades of Shearing

Look forward to seeing as many as possible at one of these venues and keeping the genre alive. Contact mikeandsue.barlow@gmail.com if you would like more information. ~ Mike



Line Dancing

Coordinator:
Mich Bowers

At our last session on Feb 9th we had a goodly number who all made a brave effort, to master some new dances, despite a few 'mishaps' (ie mistakes) made by me. Apologies all round, but if you can laugh at my errors, I don't mind, and laughing is good exercise! - Mich



Local Theatre

Coordinator:
Betty Thrall

Our next block booking is for the Tiverton Dramatic Society production of "THE UNEXPECTED GUEST" by Agatha Christie .This is the first Christie play they have done for 20 years. The date is Thursday 16th April at 7-30 pm in the New Hall Tickets £11.50 .A list will be available for your

names from the February 26th monthly meeting. Please pay by the March 26th meeting .

Synopsis

Lost in the fog, a stranger seeks refuge in a nearby house only to find a man shot dead and his wife standing over him with a smoking gun. But the woman's dazed confession is anything but convincing. Did Laura Warwick really murder her husband? If not who is she protecting? Soon the "Unexpected Guest" finds himself drawn into a web of lies and intrigue.

Do support this hard working group, it is good to welcome them back to their usual productions, may not twice a year but a least once.

In our next month's Newsletter watch out for Rose Chanin's spring variety show in aid of Devon Air Ambulance.

Betty 01844 242998 (we have call minder so remember to say u3a before your name)



Photography

**Coordinator:
Roger Gunn**

The topic for February was 'Photos from your locality'. Because of the awful weather we have been suffering Roger added 'favourite images'.

John had recently returned from the Bay of Plenty region of New Zealand and focussed on a couple of interesting and

devastating events with supporting maps and excellent photos. A few years ago, John visited White Island, an active stratovolcano with a lunar landscape and toxic gassy atmosphere. It used to be a popular tourist destination but in 2019 it explosively erupted killing a number of people who were there at the time. Tourists are no longer allowed to visit. Another volcano in the area is Mount Maunganui. This too suffered a catastrophic event, just after John had left the area in January. Heavy rainfall had de-stabilised a hillside which caused a landslide to plough into a tourist area killing six people.

Tim's contributions came from a wide variety of locations and eras from an antique black and white image of himself and brother on a fairground ride in Felixstowe, standing on a glass floor high above Blackpool, a crocodile on the Panama Canal, acoustic mushrooms in the Albert Hall, giant lily pads in Kew Gardens, colourful sails in France and a vibrant painting of Nile Rodgers.

Nigel delved into the archive to find several great shots of the local area around Ashley, Bickleigh and the canal, a bluebell wood and Jacob sheep at Waterrow, a snake's head fritillary in his garden and the Moon suspended from the ceiling of Exeter Cathedral.

Sue submitted archive pics of misty scenes around Bampton. She recently captured a rare and very brief glimpse of blue sky above Wellington and there was a clever shot of a tree reflected in a puddle on the edge of Anstey Common. Whilst Mike was not actually with us he sent a messenger with a memory stick. Misty Bampton and views of the surrounding area, a mossy tree at West Anstey, grandchildren and a pre 1990 aerial shot of Barlow Towers were amongst the images on offer.

Roger started local with reflections on the canal and the laid-up boats and canoes at the basin, the castle, a view of Tiverton Town Football Club from above, St Peter's Church and some colourful sunsets. Shots from further afield included Bristol Airport an Edinburgh sunset, a misty atmospheric pic of ramblers above Upplowman, an RNLI lifeboat painted on a building in Weymouth, a lovely bow shot of a sunset on a cruise; beautiful evening light captured in Eus, France; Dunns River falls in Jamaica; Cartagena, Columbia; colourful old American cars in Cuba and a sunset dotted with kites in India.

Phil showed some stormy sea shots and video of Sidmouth and some other more local weather related pics.

From the Bay of Plenty to Bickleigh and Jamaica and from Columbia, Blackpool and Bampton, we certainly saw a bit of the world in this session!

The next meeting will be on Thursday March 12th at 10am. Topics - 'Anything you can put a title to' and 'Photos from your locality'. Venue - to be decided. *– Phil and Roger*

Photography 2 Coordinator: **Charlie Duke**

At our monthly meeting we showed and discussed "Gardens in Winter". The images were of parts of residential gardens and from Knightshays, Killerton and Rosemoor. There were emerging plants and early spring flowers, but some of the most striking were the leafless structures of trees and bushes

and "see-through" views through the undergrowth. For our next meeting the subject is **Water!**



I have been given a quantity of photographic equipment comprising tripods, flash units, Finepix S9500 camera, small reflector screen, bags and accessories. Apart from camera (£50) rest is free.



Ramblers

Coordinator:
Jenny Bedford

The February Ramble was ably led by Roger who revisited a convenient local route which started from Uplowman Parish Hall. A baker's dozen met up fully equipped with boots/wellies, gaiters, over-trousers, jackets and hats fully prepared for whatever the weather was going to throw at us. Whilst we started in the dry,



the rain inevitably kicked in about half way round the four mile scenic and invigorating route. Roger skilfully steered us away from the shark infested, flooded gateway and the raging torrent that used to be a step-acrossable gently meandering bridge-less stream. It was good to socialise and walk despite the rain. A small contingent carried on socialising after the walk, in the warm, dry and welcoming bar of the Globe Inn. Thanks to Roger for leading and everyone else for turning out.

The next Ramble, on 10th March, will be led by Peter Hall. Location and further details will be sent to members shortly
- Jenny



Skittles

Coordinator:
Janet Loader

Skittles continue to meet every Monday at 7pm at Tiverton Football Club. New members always welcome, no experience needed. Come along for a pleasant way to spend an hour during the winter months. The bar is open for drinks and nibbles. - Janet



Snooker
Coordinator:
John Anderson

A small, social group catering for various levels of Snooker ability (up to, but not exceeding, "average"!). The normal meeting dates at Halberton Village Hall are the 1st and 3rd Friday afternoon each month. Our start time is usually 3.30pm [but

check with John when messaging (see below)]. John is a keyholder for opening up, so give John a message [e- mail/text/whatsapp, or even phone!] 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

Our regular band of enthusiastic players continues to meet every Friday from 10 - 11.30am at Uplowman Village Hall, enjoying as many friendly but competitive games as we can fit in. Coffee is taken if there's time! If anyone would like to find out more please contact Di Lewis.



If anyone would like further information please ring Di Lewis on 07713 311616.



Short Trek

Coordinator:

Phil Akers

The January Short trek was unfortunately cancelled due to adverse weather conditions.

The February Short Trek will be on Friday 27th February, starting at 10am from Beech Car Park next to the canal between Burlescombe and beyond Fenacre Bridge towards Whipcott. (Postcode - EX16 7JD. W3W - suggested.treetop.folders. Grid Ref 072

178). The walk will be led by Kelvin Peard and covers a distance of around 6.5 miles. It will take you along the canal, across fields and on quiet lanes in the area of Burlescombe and Holcombe Rogus. It WILL BE muddy in places. I hope you can make it, sadly I can't, but I will be thinking of you!
- 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*.



Thinking Allowed

Coordinator:

Eunice Hinds

We met to discuss the mental health crisis. We shared personal and professional experience of mental health issues before discussing a Guardian article by a doctor which both put the present situation in an historic context and discussed labeling of human emotions. Our next meeting will be on March 19th

https://www.theguardian.com/news/2026/feb/10/what-i-see-in-clinic-is-never-a-set-of-labels-are-we-in-danger-of-overdiagnosing-mental-illness?utm_term=699047a8ab67a01bd0b800a3c89fa3fe&utm_campaign=TheLongRead&utm_source=esp&utm_medium

Eunice EuniceHinds@gmail.com



Thursday Lunch

Coordinator:
Angie Cheshire

In February the Thursday Lunch Group visited The York Inn at Churchingford. The York Inn is a traditional Country Pub with an Olde Worlde charm and a roaring fire with arm chairs, real ale and an extensive menu.

Our group of 17 had a choice of a specials' board or the famous pie menu and, in addition, there was also a Lunchtime Savers menu.

All the group seemed to be happy with the size of the portions and quality of the meals offered. The service was prompt, friendly and efficient.

Our next outing is on 12th March, to Ponte Vecchio in Tiverton, organised by Nigel and Carol. If you have not already signed up, please email me if you would like to attend.

- Angie



Trekking

Coordinator:
Gordon Cleaver

February 2026 Long Trek – Bampton and Exbridge.

A weather warning was issued but regardless of this 15 of us set off from Bampton led by Amanda and Anne in the rain! Spirits were high for the whole walk in spite of the weather and we headed for the shelter of Morebath church for an early lunch stop when in fact it turned out dry! A wet, muddy walk best describes this day although the weather could have been a lot worse! As the day went on the mist cleared we had some fine views of the hilly countryside. Most participants stopped off at the Exeter Inn for refreshments on the way home.



March Long Trek –Thursday 6th March 2026 -10.00am Start - Village Hall Car Park, Branscombe

The March Long Trek will be led by Mike Warren and will comprise of a figure of 8 walk around Branscombe starting from the NT Forge and/or the Village Hall car park (SY197 887) and taking in Branscombe Mouth, the coastal path, Beer and Berry Camp.

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 venue for Wednesday the 4th Feb was Bickleigh Mill, Bickleigh, for sit a down at 12pm. What we didn't know until a few days before was that they were closing the doors for the final time at 4pm that day. Whether they stayed open until the

Wednesday as I booked this venue weeks ago and the staff only found out 2 days before, I don't know. Kym the owner has been there 23 years and has finally got his retirement, after several years of waiting. Kym came out to say goodbye to all and indicated that the future of the mill is unknown. We shall miss Bickleigh Mill as we have dined there for the past 30 years.

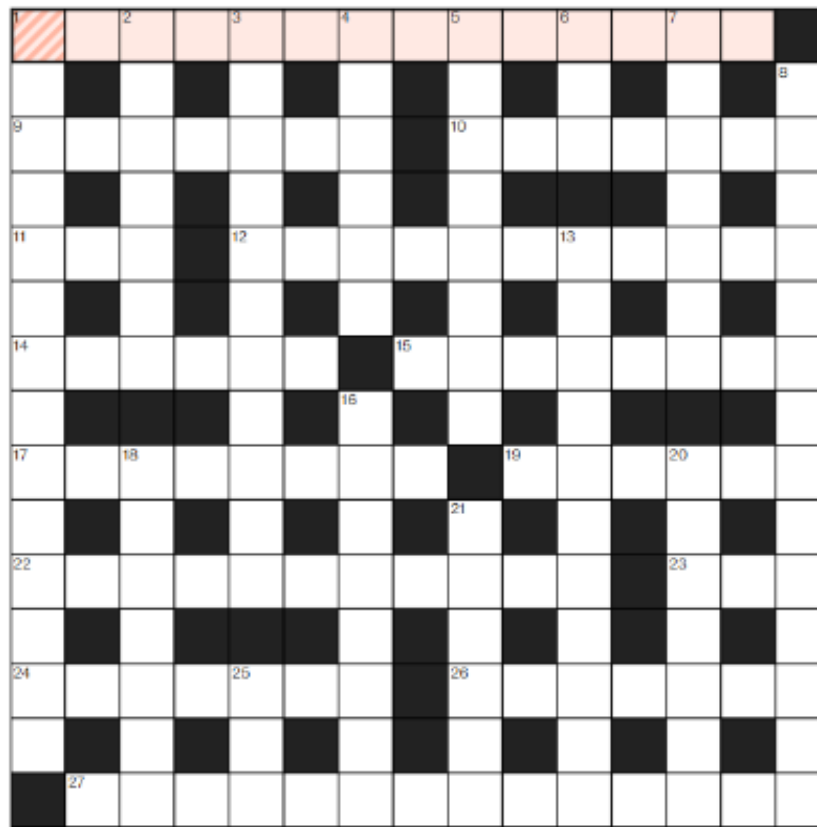
However back to our visit, the food was fantastic. As an example, fillet of beef wellington, sirloin steak, pulled beef, all as one entree, plus terrines of veggies was some of the best I have eaten there, and anywhere come to that. The other dishes of fish etc, were good, but on discussion the aforementioned took some beating. The sweets also went down a treat.

Our next venue is the **Anchor Inn Exbridge** on Wednesday the 4th March. If you did not put your name down at Bickleigh Mill and wish to attend, please contact Graham Thrall 01884 242998 as Margaret & I will not be joining you on this occasion.

- Trevor



Cryptic Crossword #54 Feb / March 2026 (Solution at end of newsletter)



Across

- 1 Bridget Jones crazy in her most recent affair (3,5,3,3)
- 9 Spirit, two degrees, used to make a dessert (7)
- 10 Creator goes nuclear! (7)
- 11 Firstly echo and resonance need an organ (3)
- 12 Left out of welding dad inserted a bit then gave a bell to tie the knot! (7,4)
- 14 Meat stirred into unripe tomatoes for starters - makes a change (6)
- 15 A broadsheet is next for auction at this moment (4,4)
- 17 Remained to support editor on following (6,2)
- 19 Vi & Nina were upset to no avail (2,4)
- 22 It's out on a flood sortie for the squadie (4,7)
- 23 Santa's weeding tool? (3)
- 24 Well-rounded actor, robust in over six spoken languages (7)
- 26 Unclear dangerous energy (7)
- 27 Operational success after minute gap in expert's presentation (7,7)

Down

- 1 The Ghost described this unnatural killing (6,4,4)
- 2 Time red mixed to reveal a sanction (7)
- 3 Observe how to carry the observer! (4,7)
- 4 Confused Gaunda is found in East Africa (8)
- 5 Magnificent fir destroyed in a trice (8)
- 6 Are changes for a long time? (3)
- 7 No trail leads to the dock (2,5)
- 8 Up at dawn? That's clever and ahead of time! (6,3,5)
- 13 New shopkeeper who only sells veg? (11)
- 16 Uppermost flat is best (3,5)
- 18 A disciple included a letter in a beer (7)
- 20 Let heat disperse for the competitor! (7)
- 21 They gathered in the Central Perk but they had no right, the little devils! (6)
- 25 Noah. No, a play (on words) (3)

