

South Durham u3a

Registered Charity Number 1207225
Active in **Darlington, Cockerton and surrounding areas**
<http://www.sdurhamu3a.org.uk/>
Friday 4th April 2025

Tuesday 8th April 2025
Darlington Assistance for Refugees

MESSAGE FROM YOUR CHAIR

I'd like to begin by welcoming more new members to South Durham u3a:

Janina Emery
Carole Northall
David Myers

The clocks have gone forward, the days are longer, and spring is finally here; I hope you are all feeling better for it. South Durham's membership is now approaching 200, and we have recently had nearly 100 members at our Bowen Road monthly meetings. This is very good news, but the growing group brings with it practical issues. You may need to wait a little while longer to sign in and to collect refreshments, but we're hoping we can speed up the process with time! Also, please try to park on Bates Avenue if at all possible and walk down Bowen Road – leave space near the hall for those who have mobility problems. Parking on Bowen Road itself isn't advised as it is so narrow.

I would like to welcome Tracey Jackson to the committee as a co-opted member. For the last few months she has been very busy developing our new website which has now gone live, so please take a look on southdurham.u3asite.uk

You will all be aware that this year marks the 200th anniversary of the Stockton and Darlington Railway. A group of us had a tour of Hopetown last year and a regional group are visiting this summer. We have been in touch with **Friends of the S&DR** who have a variety of planned walks to mark the event and have arranged for them to lead an **historical walk through Darlington on Thursday 15th May**. No charge, just a donation to their funds. The walk begins outside St Cuthberts Church and ends at Hopetown (where refreshments and toilets are available!). Members of our Local History group have already signed up for the 10.30 walk, but an 11.00 (and maybe a 11.30) walk will be available. Signup sheets will be available at the next meeting. If you won't be there, you can contact me to add your name (preferably by email).

As the Easter holidays grow nearer can I remind those of you with grandparent responsibilities that the insurance cover provided by the u3a does not permit children to attend any of our meetings or activities. Similarly dogs are not permitted with the walking groups. Please bring along friends who are interested in joining our group however, they are more than welcome to further increase our membership!

Finally, on a sad note, we have learned of the death of Bill Paton. He and Ann have been longstanding members of our group and he will be missed. We have sent our best wishes to Ann.

Ruth Beckett



Helping Hands



As our friendly welcoming u3a is becoming even more popular, we need more help with running the Monthly Meetings. Setting out of chairs & tables & taking them in again at the end of the meeting is an obvious job. Also, help in the kitchen is always needed. Perhaps carrying drinks for some of our members who are less steady on their feet.

At January's meeting it was appreciated that members turned their hands to helping clear the hall. So, the idea arose of having a group of members who are interested in helping at Monthly Meetings, at the quiz, maybe helping organise outings but do not wish to be on the committee.

You would become our Helping Hands!

If you can volunteer to join such a merry band, we'd be very grateful...

Regards

Ruth Beckett (Chair)

Carol Boyd (Group Coordinator)

LAST MONTH'S MEETING

Commonwealth War Graves Commission – Phil Grainger

Not being a natural war nerd, I wasn't sure how I'd take to this topic but found unexpected interest. For a start, I'd never heard of Sir Fabian Ware, parachute dogs, qualifying dates or charging for personal inscriptions. Bit of a cheek, I thought. Then we learnt that due to logistical reasons many were never paid for anyway.

Volunteer speaker Phil struck a balance between the big statistics that had depressed me on my visit to the WW1 battlefields and the individual stories that bring these stats to life.

His RAF background clearly motivates him to spend chunks of his free time tending those CWGC graves that are scattered around the Bishop Auckland area, and his sincerity shone through his words.

One could pose many ethical questions on this topic. One I asked Phil by email after the talk: what about those soldiers shot at dawn in the First World War for desertion or cowardice, many of whom are now pardoned? Phil had to research this but came back with the answer that yes indeed, the rules entitled them to memorials. I suspect there is a way to go before all these dead are properly commemorated...

LINDA CHADD



ps. Click below for a recent BBC News feature on the Bradford Brothers:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cgr2zl85xvvo>

A NOTE FROM SANDIE HOOD

Good morning, all,

It was a great surprise to receive such an honour. Thank you all so much.

You in turn, may be surprised to learn that this u3a originated in Auckland, New Zealand. George and Rosemary, friends who had emigrated there, introduced the idea, I became hooked and joined Darlington when I was 60. (Back then the joining rules were very strict) Darlington had a waiting list and I offered to start a new one.

We began life in the basement café of Cooper's in Post House Wynd. Our first speaker was a journalist from Bosnia which was at war at the time. He was on leave and visiting neighbouring relatives.

U3a started in France. So, when the twinning group went to Amiens I went too. The u3a is much more formal there, meetings are held in the University. I joined a flower arranging class for the morning.

Now South Durham u3a is flourishing with a record number of new members joining every month and a list of courses that is enviable. Long may it continue.

With deep gratitude

Sandie Hood.



LATEST NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

COFFEE & CHAT

☕ We meet from 10.30 to 12.30; in Binns Cafe on the last Wednesday of the month

☕ Our numbers are growing but there is plenty of room for more so do drop in for a drink and a chat with our friendly group. We would love to see you there.

Please note that for April only, we shall finish at 12.00 instead of 12.30 as several of our regular attendees are heading for a charitable event immediately afterwards.

Next meeting will be at 10.30 on Wednesday 30th April

Pauline Noble

DOT'S JUNGAGLOW CRAFTS



This session we were making quilted Eggs with an easter theme. Members were encouraged to up their game and make more intricate eggs than the initial tutorial and make we did last year.



This year there is a full programme of crafting opportunities, but these are proving very popular and there is a very limited availability. If you are interested telephone Dot Hullah to check availability in the classes.

Dot Hullah

30 th January	5D Diamond painted keyrings	31 st July	Silicon Casting jewellery
27 th February	Quilling boxes	28 th August	Japanese Bracelet making
27 th March	Easter egg bauble – advanced and beginners	25 th September	Mandella Weaving
24 th April	Peg Jewellery	30 th October	Snow Globes
29 th May	Glass Painting	27 th November	Bead Work Wreaths – tree decorations
26 th June	Loom Band Bracelets	18 th December	Quilted Christmas baubles

CREATIVE WRITING



The Creative writing group continues to grow. We are now full, but if you are interested in joining, I will make enquiries to move the group to a bigger venue. This session our writers will tackle a 500-word short story with the title The Grand Hotel. I challenged my members to give their stories an historic twist which meant that they had to research their era before writing. Each member getting the chance to read out their stories for the rest of the group.

Next Meeting is May the 7th from 10 until 12 noon at 15 Elton Grove.

Contact Dot if you are interested in joining this group

Dot Hullah

FRIDAY WALKING GROUP

21 st March. Circular walk from Piercebridge to Eppleby.



Six of us met for this first walk of Springtime, starting in Piercebridge. Through the morning we enjoyed hazy sunshine and warmth to which we unaccustomed. Layers of clothing were on and off and on again.

We began by going up through the woodland opposite the George Hotel, then walking through the parkland of Cliffe Hall, passing by Cliffe Hall cricket pitch. We were able to glimpse the hall along its imposing drive with a fine display of daffodils. Primroses and violets were in abundance below the hedgerows. We were soon into more open, relatively flat, agricultural land along bridleways that had been churned up by horses, and hence required concentration to find the safest footing. The track took us on a grassy bridge over the route of the railway line believed to be a private line linking the Darlington to Barnard Castle line at Gainford to quarries at East Layton and Forcett.

Halfway round we enjoyed refreshments at Eppleby shop and tearoom; indeed, it was such a busy hub serving several other walkers and cyclists that reinforcements were sent for to help the busy lady with washing up and food preparation.

Topics on the way back triggered by sightings ranged from the north/south divide of the naming of turnips and swedes, the routes of the old railway lines cut by Beeching, the rare breed of sheep with large, twisted horns thought to be "Racka", and cooking with wild garlic. We're never too old to learn!

It was good to be out walking in the countryside and to feel that Spring has sprung. Many thanks to Dave for leading us and to Dave and Jane for driving.

Our next walk will be on **Friday 18 th April**, to be led by Wendy. We plan to walk from Marske (Swaledale) to Helwith, a route of about 7 ½ miles, with a stop at a farm for refreshments.

As usual we will meet in Linden Avenue (Coniscliffe Road end) for a prompt start at 9.30a.m. Please bring a refreshment/drink.

Members should be confident they are fit to participate, and wear suitable clothing and footwear. They should carry information to be used in an emergency (ICE cards).

Judith

INTERMEDIATE WALKING GROUP



A five-mile walk carried out in bright March sunshine. The walk started in Coxhoe and followed pleasant, wooded paths to Kelloe where the group visited St Helens Church, Kelloe an 11th Century Church notable for memorials to Elizabeth Barrett Browning who was born in the village. A break was taken in a memorial to mining deaths during the time when this area was an important coal mining centre. We then returned to the Gem Cafe Coxhoe. Views across the area were slightly impeded by mist preventing a clear view of Durham cathedral.





There will be no walk on Monday 21st April as it is Easter Monday.

The next walk is on Monday 5th May (Bank Holiday Monday). It will be led by Dave, starting at West Auckland and walking to Ramshaw and back. We will meet as usual at Cockerton car park to leave promptly at 10am.

You may wish to bring a drink/ snack/ fruit/ lunch.

Members should be confident they are fit to participate and wear suitable clothing and footwear. They should also carry information to be used in case of an emergency. (ICE cards)

Susan.

Liz.

Thanks, Susan

LOCAL HISTORY



Sadly, we were not able to enjoy Dave Hogg's talk on Darlington Builders and Buildings this month. Over 40 of us settled down and had been introduced to Darlington in 1585 when the Great Fire wiped out most of the town dwellings when our 20th century technology let us down. The collection of slides (from the late George Flynn) could not be projected no matter how much twiddling Dave and Linda exerted. We waited patiently but had to finally call it a day. Instead, members were able to sign up for a walk in May with the Friends of the Stockton and Darlington Railway and listen to Kevin Beckett introduce the 'Arts and Crafts Movement' which he will be talking about in June.

We hope to find a way of transferring Dave's slides into a more accessible format and return to his talk at a later date. Next month we shall be listening to George Beautyman talking to us about the **Tees Cottage Pumping Station** on Tuesday 15th April – doors open @ 1.15pm talk begins @ 1.45pm.

Ruth Beckett

Month	Local History
April	Tees Pumping Station <i>George Beautyman</i>
May	Excavations @ Auckland Castle <i>John Castling</i>
June	The Arts and Crafts Movement <i>Kevin Beckett</i>
July	Gibside in the Derwent Valley <i>David Butler</i>
August	Highlights of Roman County Durham – <i>Dr. David Mason – county archaeologist</i>
September	Church Recording – <i>Vivien Clear & Rosalind Platts</i>
October	Women of the Stockton & Darlington Railway <i>Caroline Hardie</i>

If you wish to attend **Darlington u3a's History** group – this is their programme for the year – contact Steve directly to let him to know you'll be attending from our group.

**Darlington U3A History Group, 2025 - Programme of Wednesday 2pm meetings (doors open at 1.30pm.)
St Thomas Aquinas Church Hall, 249 North Road, Darlington.**

Mar. 26th	David Reynolds	"William Denton" Born in Darlington in 1823 he was a self-taught geologist, preacher and a promoter of occult practices. Learn more about this amazing character.
Apr. 30th	David Dean	"History's greatest clangers" Be entertained and informed as PowerPoint expert David returns determined to set the record straight.
June. 25th	Carol Dean	"Age of the suffragette" Women's long and bitter struggle to win the right to vote. This fascinating and dramatic story expertly told.
July 30th	Darren Billingham	"Ringtons" The history, background and development of this iconic local business whose Head Office remains in Newcastle.
Sep 24th	Richard Annis	"A Roman settlement at East Park Sedgefield. "The story of discovery and excavation (partly by the Time Team) of this settlement on the line of Cade's Road.
Oct 29th.	Members day Ken Bowman	Come early for tea, coffee and biscuits, before being entertained by Ken's "Local tales of South Durham" Folklore, myths and memories.
Nov 26th	David Butler Former County Archivist	"Drunken midwives and common strumpets" Great title for a great talk by a great speaker.

Steve Keeney U3A History Group Leader

PHILOSOPHY OF YOGA



We had a good attendance this month requiring quite a few additional chairs crammed into our lounge. We generally discussed and demonstrated the effects possible to our breathing through hand positions (Hasta Mudras) and from varying ratios of breath rhythms.

Next philosophy meeting will be Wednesday 16th April at 10:00 as usual

Barry and Pat Garnett

LUNCHEON GROUP



I think it is fair to say that the March get-together at the Blackwell Grange Hotel was a mixed experience. Some members enjoyed their food, one commenting that she had the best fish & chips she had eaten in years! However, one member described her meal as burnt & inedible & quite rightly didn't pay for it. Another problem was poor service when coffee had been ordered as there is only one coffee machine! As I said, a mixed experience.

Lunch Group Friday 25th April at 1pm. For this get together we will return to one of our favourites, Tre Amici in Skinnergate. We do not need to pre-order & I will take numbers at the main meeting on 8th April

Stella Barnes

NEW MEMBERS (and not so new members) COFFEE MORNING



This will take place the fourth Tuesday of each month- in Café Zest Binns 10.30- 12.00

Our aim is to allow new members to get to know each other in a less busy setting than the monthly Bowen Road meetings. There will be committee members present should you have any questions to ask. We hope that this will help you make new friends and meet with our recently joined members in a relaxed environment. No need to book, just turn up.

Jenny & Brenda

PLAY READING



Our play for March had the suitable title of 'Confusions'; suitable because (perhaps) of its readers, or because of me. Only five of us met together and, as there were only four copies of the Alan Ayckbourn play available, it seemed the suitable choice. There were five short plays in the book, each interrelated and, as usual in Alan Ayckbourn's writing, with some interesting characters. From one play to the next we could see why the behaviour of each character was as it was, influencing the behaviour of someone in the following play. When produced in the West End in 1976 among the cast were Pauline Collins, John Alderton and Derek Fowlds.

Our/my main confusion was that as we read through, we found a familiarity in the storyline and eventually realised that we had read them before! Oh, our memories! We enjoyed our reading anyway.

I see that Gainford Society are back to the stage again in April. That's good for them, and perhaps we can borrow our plays from them again.

Our next meeting is on **Tuesday, 15th April** at 2pm at Isabel's.

Muriel Jones

FAMILY HISTORY



The group now meets in the Local Studies Room at the Crown Street Library on the second Friday of the month

Last month's meeting saw our enthusiastic members busily using the library's many resources to trace information about their ancestors. Although most of the records relate to the Darlington area, some people have been able to locate information from other areas.

If you are interested in joining us, please contact me first at as places are limited. Family History will be at 2.00 on **Friday 11th April**

Pauline Noble

READING GROUP 1



For our March meeting we met on Wednesday 12th at Ann's.

After the favourable reviews of the film *All the Small Things* we had decided to read the original novella by Claire Keegan, the prizewinning Irish short story writer.

We did not regret it. Everyone enjoyed the story of the coal merchant and his family in the run-up to Christmas in a small Irish town in 1985. Her use of language impressed us all: to quote Hilary Mantel, "every word is the right word in the right place". And in addition, we were subtly led to think about the difficult subject of the Magdalene laundries, their associated monogamy and cruelty and how they influenced everyday life in the community. A book that was both enjoyable and thought-provoking, a really worthwhile read.

Our next meeting will be **Wednesday 9th April** 2.30 at Gillian's to discuss *The Shetland Bus* by David Howorth.

Joan Bock

READING GROUP 2



At our March meeting we discussed another crime novel, this one by Ann Cleeves, 'The Long Call.' We were familiar with the author's previous detectives, Vera Stanhope in the northeast

Set in north Devon we were introduced to Matthew Venn who had returned to his roots. While Matthew and his team tried to solve the mystery of the body on the beach, we read about unresolved aspects from Matthew's childhood, the dominant role of an evangelical church while he was young as well as his very strained relationship with his mother. Some of the group weren't drawn to his character; others found him interesting. Overall views about the book were positive and several of us plan to read more in the series and to try to catch up with the TV series. Having read LJ Ross last month, comparisons were inevitable, and there was a preference for Ann Cleeves as a writer.

Next meetings

11 th April. Our chosen book is 'Blue Sisters' by Coco Mellor, to be held at Pat's.

9 th May. The book is 'Pompeii' by Robert Harris. To meet at Brenda's.

Judith Bryant

FRENCH CONVERSATION



We have some really good conversations and last week talked about some French music.

This coming Monday we are playing Scrabble in French. We always welcome new ideas for sessions and welcome any new members. The probable dates for our sessions will be 11.15-

12.15:

Monday April 29

Monday May 12

Tuesday May 27

Monday June 9

Monday June 23

Monday July 7

All in the Newcastle Building Society.

Please contact me if you have any queries.

Celia Howarth

SCRABBLE GROUP



This is a fairly new group, and we need some new members. We are a mixed ability group so whatever your level you're sure to fit in. Held on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month in The Travellers Rest, in Cockerton

Interested? Contact Brenda Ellidge -

ITALIAN CONVERSATION

Our beginner's group continues to thrive and we've enjoyed learning some shopping vocabulary. After the Easter we will be starting a new topic about the town and finding the way. The probable dates for our sessions are from 10.00-11.00:

Monday April 29

Monday May 12

Tuesday May 27

Monday June 9

Monday June 23

Mon July 7

All in the Newcastle Building Society. Please contact me if you have any queries.

Celia Howarth

TRIPS WITH SOUTH DURHAM U3A – Advanced notice of what's to come

Wednesday 7th May [Harewood House](#) near Leeds (1 seat available)

Thursday 3rd July [Scampton Hall & Gardens](#), Malton (5 seats available)

Monday 8th September [Walking with Alpacas](#) – Leven Bank near Yarm

Friday November 14th Morning: [Lit & Phil](#) – a guided tour of the largest independent library outside London @ 10.30am
Afternoon: [Victorian Tunnel](#) – tour 1.30–3.30pm

November 18th 2025 Lees Coaches: Christmas at Castle Howard. Ring Lees Coaches to book seats on 01913780653 - Saying you are South Durham u3a

Replacement Trip for Harlow Carr and Gardens – Harrogate

A replacement trip for Harlow Carr Gardens – Harrogate has been made due to lack of interest. I have therefore changed the venue to Scampton Hall & Gardens in Malton. It's a 1-hour 25mins journey and marks a new adventure for South Durham u3a. The guided tour of the house and gardens is £18.50 plus coach fare.

The House is wheelchair accessible, but no lift, there are chairs in rooms for members to sit down, if you are unable to manage the stairs everything is available for members to view the upstairs via a video link. Historic House Members are free.

Carol Boyd

GROUP TRIP TO The Oriental Museum – Thursday 19th June

The trip will comprise a guided tour of the galleries, highlighting some of the Museum's newest acquisitions. The tour will commence at 10.30am and will be followed by an object handling session which enables members to get hands on with museum objects. These sessions are conversational with members sharing their own thoughts.

The formal part of the trip will end by 12.30pm, when you will have free time to look around and/or get some lunch. The Museum has a small cafe where you can get hot/cold drinks, biscuits and flapjacks, no sandwiches or fresh cakes. The closest place to the Museum is the Botanic Gardens with a large cafe.

Accessibility - There is seating in most of the galleries, and rest stools available for those less mobile. There are lifts to all levels, and an accessible toilet.

Transport and Parking - Travel is to be arranged independently by car share. If you are able to offer a car share place to another member(s); please let me know your email and indicate that you are happy for it to be shared. Members are welcome to use the Museum's free carpark, additional car park spaces are available in the Teikyo car park which is up a ramp on the approach to the museum.

Travel is to be arranged independently by car share. If you are able to offer a car share place to another member(s); please let me know your email and indicate that you are happy for it to be shared. Members are welcome to use the Museum's free carpark, additional car park spaces are available in the Teikyo car park which is up a ramp on the approach to the museum.

Cost - The Museum doesn't generally charge for the gallery tour. If you want to make a donation, there is a donation box at the reception desk. There is a charge of £1 per person for the object handling (payment instructions to follow). To maximise visibility, **numbers are strictly limited to 15**. If you are interested, contact places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis, Further details can be found at [Oriental Museum - Durham University](#).

TRIP TO WENTWORTH WOODHOUSE – WEDNESDAY 2ND APRIL

Many thanks to Carol Boyd for organising this most enjoyable coach visit, blessed by sunny skies and absence of motorway holdups. I'd long wanted to come here, and wasn't disappointed. What a great local resource for the people of Sheffield, Barnsley and Rotherham. The guides were excellent too and had an obvious commitment to the place, more so I thought because of the ups and downs in its history. Really three houses in one, built by three leading families, undermined by its own coal workings and only saved by the determination of a local businesswoman - if only the walls could talk. It was worthwhile doubling back inside after lunch, when I caught sight of the Jacobean staircase (only haunted on Fridays). The grounds were also worth exploring, and I was particularly impressed by what must be one of the longest terraces in the world. Taking my own provisions was a good idea for avoiding the queues and I do hope there'll be more ladies' loos in future. As an estate agent would say, "...scope for further development".



LINDA CHADD

AN OPPORTUNITY FOR u3a MEMBERS



Permission to use picture given by HBCBA

As fairly new members of u3a my husband and I have been enjoying the various speakers and topics.

I wondered if you could mention the Bowling Club that I am a member of and whether any members of the group would be interested in trying a game of bowls.

My club is Hundens Green Community Bowls Association, and we are based at Eastbourne Complex in Bourne Avenue off Hundens Lane. We are trying to recruit new members and would welcome any visitors to the green. Any Friday afternoons from May at 2.00pm. We would welcome any member to view our facilities and hospitality.

This is not a new u3a group but simply one of our new members sharing the opportunity for you to try Bowling. If you are interested, please contact Susan Walker – secretary - for further information.

TRIP TO THEATRE ON THE LAKE

Joan Saddler is organising (outside of u3a) a trip to the Theatre on the Lake in Keswick to see Noises Off - a Michael Frayn comedy. She is planning to go to the matinee performance on Saturday 26th July at 2 p.m.

The seat tickets will be £27 and £37.50 and the cost of the coach will be to add to this.

Joan's contact details are:
or message on mobile: she is on What's App

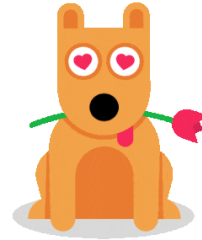
Send your creative gems to the Editor Dot Hullah at
sdu3aeditor@gmail.com

If you love writing poems or stories, why not send one in to be included in our new look creative corner.

Attraction

She strolled along the quiet street,
She ambled past his gate.
He wanted to catch up with her
But was just a moment too late,
She was just the one he wanted
But he'd always been out of luck.
He'd planned to make her his but
His plans had come unstuck.
But this time he would win his prize,
He hoped she wouldn't flee...
Then he gave a Woof! And she miaowed
And shot to the top of a tree.

Kate Brown



MOTHER

Sometimes I see her clearly
Standing by the range
In kitchen colours

Light golden crusty bread
and polished black fenders
soft and smiling against
a black-leaded hob and firelight

at times I see her faintly
seated on a low tapestry chair
bending to the white seaming
or clicking needles with grey wool.

Sometimes I glimpse her laughing
Bathing children in a huge white bath
Blowing bubbles deftly ... finger and
thumb poised

Often, I feel her presence
a slow warm comforting
like coming indoors out of the cold.

Margaret Rule

TRIPS, OUTINGS AND COMPETITIONS OFFERED BY OUR REGIONAL U3A

Northumbria Region u3a Creative Writers

Short Story Competition

and/or

Poetry Competition

You don't have to be a member of a creative writing group to enter. All u3a members of Northumbria Region are welcome to submit a short story, of no more than 1,500 words and/or a poem of no more than 16 lines.

on the theme of 'Echoes'

Your entry must be received by 12 noon on Monday 2nd June 2025.

The competition is free to enter.

Rules and regulations can be found on the Regional website or by contacting Cecilia Coulson, lead of the Northumbria Region u3a Creative Writers



The following trips and visits are offered by our Regional u3a.

You are welcome to attend, just follow the instructions given on the trips or events.

A purple and blue poster for a music event. At the top, it says 'u3a Learn, Laugh, Live.' Below that, 'Northumbria Region u3a An Afternoon Of Music'. The location is 'North Biddick Social Club, Bonemill Lane, Washington, NE38 8AJ'. The date and time are 'Thursday June 5th 2025 2pm-5pm'. It features illustrations of a person playing a trumpet, a person playing a piano, and a person playing a guitar. At the bottom, it says 'Come Along And Support Your Fellow u3a Members Who Will Entertain Us With Their Music. Entrance Fee: £2 At The Door Buffet £7 (Optional)'. Contact information: 'Please Contact Bob Pullen Of Prudhoe u3a For More Details: robertgipullen@gmail.com'.

Northumbria Region u3a Event Team



THE RIVER TEES AT STOCKTON: APRIL 17th, 2025

In the company of Teesside Archives guide, Christine Corbett, come with us for an afternoon walk along the river Tees.

Christine will tell us of the history of the industry that sprang up along the river; the Tees Barrage; the wildlife that has come back to its waters and the Portrack Marsh after the clean-up of the river, and much more.

Starting at 1.30 pm we will assemble at the Barrage on the north side of the river and walk to the Newport Bridge, crossing over (there are steps!) and returning along the south side of the Tees back to the Barrage. Approx. 3 miles and 2 hours in duration.

£5 pp to pay on the day. Maximum 30 places available.

To book a place please contact:
Patricia Marcus

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NORTHUMBRIA U3A EVENT HOPETOWN DARLINGTON JUNE 13TH 2025



We couldn't let the 200th anniversary of the first railway pass by without marking it with some event, so a day at Hopetown Darlington has been arranged for you.

Hopetown Darlington, previously known as Head of Steam and formerly known as the Darlington Railway Centre and Museum, is a railway museum located on the **1825** route of the **Stockton and Darlington Railway**, which was the world's first steam-powered passenger railway.

The newly refurbished 7.5-acre museum site reopened to the public in July 2024.



The day will include a 45 to 60-minute tour of the site plus a visit led by the A1 Steam Loco Trust where one of their volunteers will show you around their premises.

To book a place

Start: 11am

Lunch break: 12 - 1pm

Next: 1.30 pm A1 Steam Loco Trust presentation (approx. 1 hour)

There will be time for further exploration as you wish, before you return home.

Cost: £5 pp - refreshments and lunch not included

Parking: plenty on site @ £4 all day

Train: It is on the Saltburn to Bishop Auckland line - see local timetable for more information.



Newcastle Central Mosque

Learning about different faiths and religions helps every member come together.

A tour and talk by Brother Khadim at **Newcastle Central Mosque**

Date: Wednesday 23rd July 2025.

Venue: Newcastle Central Mosque, The White House, Grainger Park Rd. Newcastle NE4 8RQ

Time: 10 am - 10.30 am registration and refreshments.

Donation: £3.00

Tour and talk to last about an hour and a half.
For further details and registration please contact
Sandra Davison

Numbers limited to 30 members.

Please be advised. It has been requested that shoes will have to be removed. However, covers will be provided for those who are not able to remove their shoes.

A Visit to Raby Castle and Gardens



Northumbria Region Events Team have arranged a visit to Raby Castle on Tuesday 4 September 2025.

Raby is one of the most impressive intact castles in the north of England. Built in the fourteenth century by the powerful Neville family, it has a long history. Home to Cecily Neville, mother of two kings of England, it was also the scene of the plotting of the Rising of the North and a Parliamentary

stronghold during the Civil War. The castle has superb collections, powerful exteriors and fascinating stories from the lives of people who lived and worked here.

Following a guided tour of the Castle you can explore the picturesque parklands where both red and fallow deer roam. Visit the 18th century Walled Garden which has been recently remodelled renowned garden designer Luciano Giubbilei with Lady Barnard. Enjoy the exhibition telling the story of the Castle's history and introducing you to the sights, sounds and magnificent landscapes of the Raby Estate in Teesdale including High Force Waterfall.

The Vinery Café offers lunches as well as lighter snacks

Well-behaved dogs on leads are permitted to visit the Walled Gardens, Deer Park, Vinery Café as well as the Coach House Shop and Exhibition.

Cost is £16.50 per person – please note u3a members who have an annual pass for Raby Castle are entitled to a reduced entry fee of £6 to join the Castle tour.

To book a place contact Moira Stokoe

Meet at 10:15am. Tour of Castle commences at 10:30am

MONTHLY MEETING SPEAKERS

Monthly Meeting	Speaker & Title
8 th April	Darlington Assistance for Refugees
13 th May	John Thorley: Cern and after: The Large Hadron Collider
10 th June	Denis Fox: History of Cinema
8 th July	Alex Mitchell: VOICE: UK National Innovation Centre for Ageing at Newcastle University
12 th August	Aycliffe Beekeepers Association
9 th September	I AM ROADSMART Helping to make better drivers and riders through education and upskilling
14 th October	Kate Streatfield: Croft's Crossing- her experience of researching and writing a book
11 th November	AGM & Stuart Miller – Lee Miller war photographer
9 th December	TBC

GROUPS ON OFFER

Bridge – David Dixon	Travellers Rest	2-4pm every other Tuesday from 10th December
Canasta – Sylvia Elliott	Travellers Rest	2pm alternate Thursday of the month. £2 each – includes refreshments.
Coffee & Chat - Pauline Noble	Binns cafe	10.30-12.30am last Wednesday of each month
Creative Writing – Dot Hullah	Leader's home	10-12am first Wednesday of each month
Current Affairs – Gill Turnbull	Members' homes	10am-12 noon on the 3rd Monday of the month
Family History	Members' homes	2nd Friday of each month
French, Advanced Celia Howarth	Above Newcastle Building Society, Market Place	11.15 on 2nd & 4th Monday of each month
Friday Walking Judith Bryant	Park cars in Linden Ave (nearest Coniscliffe Rd end)	9.30am on the 3rd Friday of each month
Intermediate Walking Susan –	Cockerton car park	10am on the 1st & 3rd Monday of each month
Italian for beginners Celia Howarth	Above Newcastle Building Society	10-11am on 2nd & 4th Monday of each month
Jungalow Crafts – Dot Hullah	Above Newcastle Building Society, Market Place	10am-12pm Last Thursday of the month
Local History – Ruth Beckett/Linda Chadd	Willow Road Community Centre	1.30pm on the 3rd Tuesday of the month
Luncheon Group - Stella Barnes	Pubs/restaurants	1.00pm on the last Friday of each month
New Members (and old) coffee morning Jenny Hurt	Binns café	10.30-12 on 4th Tuesday of each month
Philosophy of Yoga Barry and Pat Garnett	Members' homes	10am-12 noon on 3rd Wednesday of each month
Play Reading – Muriel Jones	Members' homes	2pm on the 3rd Tuesday of the month

Reading Group 1 – Toni Carr	Members' homes	2nd Wednesday of each month
Reading Group 2 – Judith Bryant.	Members' homes	10.30am on 2nd Friday of each month
Rummikub – Liz Kay	Members' homes	10am-12 noon on the 1st Friday of each month
Scrabble Brenda Ellidge	Travellers Rest Cockerton	2pm on 2nd & 4th Monday of each month