South Durham u3a

Registered **Charity Number 1207225**
Active in Darlington, Cockerton and surrounding areas
Tuesday, 6th October **2026**

CAKE FEST AND

"Firefighter – Being the Best" with GARY BANKHEAD

13TH OCTOBER – 10 till 12

NEWS FROM YOUR CHAIR

Welcome to our new members

Sheila Schofield
Mike Dundas

Welcome to our new members, who are joining us at a very exciting time in our u3a's journey. I hope they will be very happy with their choice to join us and find rewarding activities and events to try.

After the excitement of the announcement of our move to Cockerton Club last month things are moving forward at a pace. This month's meeting in Bowen Road Community Hall will be our last one before we move. It is my hope that lots of you can make this meeting a memorable one, closing the chapter on our very happy time at Bowen Road with lots of your cakes to share and enjoy.



So, this is the important bit our November meeting is not only our AGM but will be the first one in our new home. Please DON'T turn up at Bowen Road for our AGM because we will not be there, and you will be missed. A redirection notice will be placed on the door at Bowen Road just in case any of our members or new members for that matter turn up.

There is still time to sign up for our Christmas Party this year, but I will say that the up take for places has been fantastic and spaces for the event are running out fast. So, if you want to join the fun you need to contact Carol Boyd as soon as possible.

Finally, I would just like to reminder members who have not yet re-newed their membership for the 2026/2027 year to do so by contacting Ann Robinson - who is your membership secretary and she will be able to advise you of your next steps.

Dot Hullah
Chair/Editor

Christmas Event

On Tuesday 8th December

There are only a few places left for this event, which is to be held at Cockerton Club. We will again have a Ukelele Band, to entertain you, along with a fun quiz, games and a buffet lunch.

Doors will open at 10 am and finish at 2 pm

THIS EVENT IS INSTEAD OF THE NORMAL MONTHLY MEETING

PLEASE DON'T COME ALONG ON THE 8TH DECEMBER IF YOU HAVENT PAID £15 TO ATTEND THIS EVENT.

There will be a yummy buffet from TAYLORS the butchers to enjoy.

If you're not on our list, you will not be allowed to enter the club on this occasion sorry.

DOORS WILL OPEN AT 10 O'CLOCK SHARP SO PLEASE DON'T COME EARLIER







Entry is by signing in sheet

LOOKING AND SEEING
Dave Phillips on aspects of art





DAVE PHILLIPS ON WAYS OF LOOKING AND WAYS OF SEEING IN ART, Tuesday September 8 Dave took us on a wry and sometimes uncomfortable journey into our own reactions to art in this thoughtful talk. Fragonard's "The Swing" (1767-8) began as a quaint rural idyll but by the time Dave had finished with us it was a piece of light porn! After all, creepy upskirters today can be arrested and charged... Similarly, Manet's last work "Bar at the Folies-Bergere" (1882) looks like a clever exercise in perspective and reflected image but then turns out to be inaccurate. Was this deliberate or did the painter really not care by that stage in his life? I always did say the art market was a con, but this won't stop me haunting galleries. However, I'm resolved to study fewer exhibits for longer. Finally, here's a work from the recently visited "First Site" gallery in Colchester - Michael Landy's "Essex Man". My Essex-born son-in-law says it looks like him. Is it an insult? A tribute? Your call...

LINDA CHADD

LAST CALL TO OUR BAKERS

TO CELEBRATE THE END OF OUR SILVER ANNIVERSARY YEAR AND OUR FINAL MEETING IN BOWEN ROAD

All Welcome with or without cakes !!!!!!!

As part of the final celebrations for our Silver A… to hold a cake fest. It can be a cake or cu… g your cakes to Bowen Road on the 13th of … sample your delights, as a fitting end to o… of silver anniversary celebrations.



In order for me to actually make the necessary arrangements, could you please let me know that you would be willing to submit a cake. Send your details to Dot Hullah so that I can arrange for enough display space to be available.

WHAT U3A MEANS TO ME.....

Very interesting talks. I haven't been lately as I have mobility issues. Thank you

Since joining the u3a I have found everybody very friendly. I enjoyed the afternoon tea on the boat.

Norma Boyes

FRIENDSHIP

Anon

Barry and I joined South Durham u3a about 24 years ago and we have met many friends through them. We enjoy the monthly meetings and a varied range of guest speakers learning quite a lot along the way.

We have enjoyed walking, first with hill walking group then later finding the intermediate group more appropriate and since then we have had two walking holidays in the Lake District.

We were involved with the Music Group for many years in members' homes and eventually holding numerous meetings ourselves with material from Prime Video and YouTube.

Most recently we held meetings on the subject of Yoga Philosophy which was very well received and ran for 3 years when we felt we had exhausted our knowledge of the subject. Being a member of South Durham u3a has been a very rewarding experience for both of us

Tell us what you think of your u3a .... More in next month's newsletter.

Send submissions to Dot Hullah at southdurhamu3achair@gmail.com

LATEST NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

COFFEE & CHAT



The group meets at Saltfish Townhouse in Houndgate on the last Wednesday of each month everyone is welcome. Do come along between 10.30 and 12.30 for a chat and an excellent cup of coffee in pleasant surroundings.

I look forward to seeing everyone.

Pauline Noble

DOT'S JUNGALOW CRAFTS



This session my crafters where attempting Kumihimo, which is a Japanese method of making chorded bracelets. As you can see, they did a marvellous job.







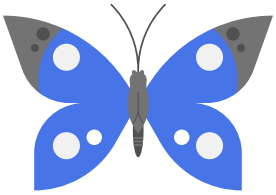


Dot Hullah

CREATIVE WRITING



This session the group wrote creatively about Butterflies. Read some of their efforts further on in this newsletter.



Dot Hullah

FRIDAY WALKING GROUP

Friday walking group The Mosaic Trail. 18th September Four hardy walkers set out for Dallowgill in the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty between Pateley Bridge and Ripon to walk the Crackpots Mosaic Trail. Along the 7 mile trail there were 22 mosaics each about 18 inches square depicting local wildlife and landmarks. The starting point out on the moors presented a wide landscape coloured by the heather in bloom. It was windy out on the moor, but not terribly cold. Patchy clouds sailed overhead. We were soon in the shelter of a ravine with woodland and the wind was blocked. We noticed a curiosity among the sheep.One flock was dyed with a red dot and also had the right horn dyed red. They kept to the south of the beck, while the sheep on the north side of the beck were also dyed on the back and horn, but with blue dye. A quick consultation with Google revealed the horn dying is to deter theft which is rife in lonely places on the moors. After crossing another beck we ate our lunch on a perfectly inclined grassy bank. Later in the day some light rain started, by that time we were almost back to the starting point. All in all, we missed only one of the mosaics. Perhaps it was hidden by the summer vegetation, perhaps it had disintegrated. Other walkers have reported not finding that mosaic. The outing was concluded by hot drinks and treats in a charming cafe in Masham.

Jane.

Thanks to Susan for leading the walk.

INTERMEDIATE WALKING GROUP

Intermediate Walk on 7th September

9 of us set off from Bishop Middleham via steps, fields and tracks to reach the old railway line. After 1/2 mile we turned left to follow fields and eventually entered Hardwick Park. At the cafe we had our lunch, enjoying the luxury of sitting at picnic tables! We then returned to the old railway track and turned left to follow the River Skerne back to the cars.

Intermediate walk 21st September to Reeth



Every walk begins with the allocation of bums on seats in cars. Today ten of us fitted snugly into two cars and we hit the road. The countryside through Richmond and onto Reeth is the tourist guide manual to Yorkshire. Winding roads, grazing sheep, undulating hills and magnificent stretches of woodland. Sometimes the journey beats the walk, but not today. Reeth. What to say. Firstly, there is a very handy public toilet. Top marks for that. Secondly, the whole place is picture perfect, and lastly, it was warm and sunny. Jackpot. The walk led us uphill and down dale, literally. Always before us, drystone walls oozing history, small grey stone farms tucked into the landscape, scree slopes and sheep, so many sheep. At one point we came across a derelict farmhouse, and what stories it could tell. Today, it was occupied, sheep in every room, ignoring us interrupting their family party.

The walk ended at the much-anticipated Bikers Cafe. Their cakes are legendary. Word to the wise. Best not to indulge in one (or more) if you have travel sickness. It is a long road back home. Just saying.

Thanks to Jane and the drivers, especially the sympathetic one....

Alex Bailey

The walk on 19th October will be led by Jane. It is 5.3 miles from Bedale in a circle to Crakehall and returns to Bedale. Mostly flat, field walking, unpaved tracks, a little road walking at the start and finish and 6 stiles. There is a shelter at Crakehall where we can have a tea/ lunch break.

The walk on 2nd November will be from Escomb to Witton Park including a section by the River Wear. It is a full 5 miles but is pretty flat and on a good path.
Some sections may be muddy if it's been raining. Starting point with parking is on Saxon Green, Escomb - turn sharp left at the pub as you come into the village (before you reach the church) and drive to the end of the road. There is an excellent statue by Ray Lonsdale at Witton Park where we can sit for a while. We can choose whether to carry on uphill along the road to get back or return the way we came.

Please meet at Cockerton car park for all walks with a prompt 10am start. You may wish to bring something to eat and drink.

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) Could you please check and ensure these cards are up to date with all details.

To ensure that we do not get mud/ dirt on the driver's mats, could all walkers have a change of footwear or alternatively a plastic bag/ newspaper.

Finally, there will be a meeting for Intermediate Walkers on Monday, 14th December from 2 to 4 at Newcastle Building Society to decide next year's walking programme
I'm hoping that people will come with ideas of walks they would like to lead plus dates. Even if are unsure about leading, if you have some ideas of walks you are very welcome to come.
The more volunteers we have the easier my job is!!

Susan

LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

15th September – Josephine Bowes the collector; Bargains and Beauty

This month's local history meeting began with a request from our speaker for a 'lectern' to hold her notes in order that she could talk to us and use her hands for gesticulating!

From this standpoint **Judith Phillips** summarised all she had learned in the last 15 years as **Associate Archivist at the Bowes Museum**, where she has identified (and translated) ten thousand documents relating to purchases made by Josephine and John Bowes (predominantly Josephine who was the driving force behind the collection and setting up of the museum). Fifteen thousand items were bought forming the Founder's Collection - paintings, ceramics, lace, tapestries books and manuscripts. They bought antiques alongside contemporary pieces, mainly from dealers in France but also across Europe.

Judith identified specific objects in the collection as examples: a small Sevres teapot from 1700s which was purchased as an antique; a Monticelli painting which suggested Josephine was attracted to the new Impressionist movement; a clockwork mouse (possibly intended as a present from Josephine for her husband) which cost 22 francs in 1871; a salt cellar, the cheapest item in the collection costing 35 centimes.

Why did the Bowes collect was Judith's final question to us? It gave social status to the couple living in Paris and identified them as Patrons of the Arts. The collection was to be the heart of the Museum they

were having built in Barnard Castle, which neither lived to see completed, and, in the absence of any children, it was their Legacy.



A truly fascinating talk which should nudge all of us to return and visit this notable Museum on our doorstep. Membership is reduced for 'locals' from Darlington! Watch this space – we'll try and arrange a guided tour in the near future for those of us who would like to find out more.

The photo shows that necessity is the mother of invention, as Kevin Beckett assembled a DIY lectern from items found in the hall (notably an upturned chair trolley, spare chair and wire rack). Not nearly as valuable as the exhibits at the Bowes Museum!

Everyone is welcome to come along to our Local History Meetings. Held on the Third Tuesday in each month at Willow Road Community Hall. Doors open @ 1.15pm, refreshments available, talk begins @ 1.45pm. £2 per person.

Oct 20	Kerry Jonas	Building for the Future – the alterations being carried out at St Cuthberts Church
Nov 17	Penny Moon	'Mary Ward, Pilgrim and Educator'. An historical tale with a family history link, from one of our members.
Dec 15	Richard Annis	What lies beneath the site of an Amazon Warehouse?

Ruth Beckett

NEW MEMBERS (and not so new members) COFFEE MORNING



This will take place the fourth Tuesday of each month- in William Stead Wetherspoons Crown Street 10.30- 12.00.

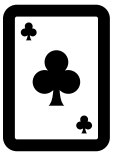
Enter by the main door on Crown Street, turn right up two steps to the raised area, where you will find our reserved tables and a u3a yellow sign. Our aim is to allow new members to get to know each other in a less busy setting than the monthly Cockerton Club meetings. There will be committee members 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 (New member Liaison)



CANASTA GROUP

Welcome to our friendly canasta group. We meet on Thursday afternoon twice a month starting 2pm at the Travellers Rest Cockerton.



It's a nice friendly fun afternoon with no previous experience necessary. We, as a group, provide non stressful tuition. We have recently welcomed a new member.

Why not give it a go? Tea coffee and biscuits on offer. Playing cards provided.

Joan Sadler

GARDENING GROUP

Tree Trail around West Cemetery - On a sunny, breezy day in September, our guide Fal Sarker from Darlington and Teesdale Naturalists' Field Club took a group of us on one of her fascinating tree trails around West Cemetery. She shared lots of interesting stories about the origins and history of the many different trees growing there making it a really enjoyable and informative walk. One of the trees Fal pointed out was a beautiful Tulip tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*), thought to be over 100 years old. Originally from North America, this beautiful and rare tree had flowered earlier this year for the first time in many years. Its flowers are shaped like tulips, which is how it got its name. We also learnt about the two "Trees of Heaven," (Ailanthus altissima) planted opposite each other along the path leading to the chapel entrance, symbolically lining the way to Heaven for the departed. Fal showed us examples of fruits, leaves and cones from Fir, Beech, Cedar, Oak, Yew, Ash and Monkey-Puzzle trees growing in the cemetery. We learnt that some of these magnificent trees have stood there for over one hundred years.





Tulip tree (*Liriodendron stolonifera*)

The next meeting of the Gardening group will be held on Thursday, 15th October at 10am at Elm Ridge Methodist Church.

Ann Robinson

FRENCH CONVERSATION

What an enjoyable time we've had in French sessions these last few months! We've learnt and discussed about: French exhibits in the Bowes museum; a working trip to Algeria; a dabble into French politics; French heritage and famous sites; gastronomy; and so much more, including games of Scrabble in French and other things that have made us all laugh! We're not perfect in our French but we're all eager to learn and have good chats! Our sessions for the Autumn are on Mondays from 11.15-12.15 in the Newcastle BS.

19 October
26 October
9 November
30 November
14 December

Please contact me for further information.

Celia Howarth

DIY GROUP

Members concentrated on learning how to select and use individual power tools to cut, plane and sand the wood for their chosen project. Some also drilled holes and finished with counter sinking ready to join the sections of wood with screws. Although the more complicated projects will take some time to complete hopefully, we may soon have some partially assembled items to photograph.

Our next meeting will be held on Wednesday 14 th October 2026 at 10 am. At The Well.

Anyone interested in joining our friendly group please email Sue Clark











FAMILY HISTORY

After our lay off over the Summer I am pleased to annouce that the Family History Group will begin meeting again in the Centre for Local studies at Darlington Library in Crown Street. As before this will be from 2pm until 4pm on the second Friday of the month. The next meeting will be on the 9th October.

Jane Laninga

READING GROUP 2

We chose Ian McEwan's novel "What We Can Know" for our September meeting. The story spanned the period from 2014, when a supposedly brilliant poem was read aloud by the poet at a dinner party, to over a hundred years later when academic researchers were still looking for a copy of the poem. The plot of the story was clever and the whereabouts of the poem, if it existed at all, weren't disclosed until the final page. Conditions following major global

warming were predicted, with the population of Britain much reduced, and habitable places limited to high land which became islands left uncovered by rising sea levels. Important documents were moved to libraries and universities on high ground. As often happens in our group, opinions were divided though more negative than usual. Comments ranged from pretentious, academic elite, disappointing and not as good as McEwan's other novels. Next meetings: Friday 9th October. "In Memoriam" by Alice Winn. Friday 13th November. "Tell Me Everything" by Elizabeth Strout.

Judith Bryant

Are you interested in forming a 3rd Reading Group

It has come to my attention that some of our members would like to attend the reading groups. Unfortunately, the two reading groups we have are full at the moment, but if any member wishes to form another reading group, please contact Dave Cooke our Group Co-ordinator and he will be able to get you started.

Dave Cooke

BRING YOUR OWN CRAFT & NATTER



Four crafters met up at Newcastle Building Societies' upstairs meeting room on Wednesday June 24th on a very hot morning and enjoyed the air-conditioning and a chat. Topics of conversation included crafting while cruising, Thornton Hall Gardens, ballroom dancing and a Van Gough exhibition. We meet from 9.30 until 11.30 on the last Wednesday of the month and have room for new members.

Do You need help with appointments



We have been told that if ever you need help getting to hospital appointments the Friends of Darlington Memorial Hospital do a volunteer car service taking people to and from appointments. The service relies on donations given to the driver. To book the telephone number is 01325 743866.

READING GROUP 1



""The Sign of the Four" by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

This was the second of the Sherlock Holmes novels and is set in the murky London of 1888.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was a rather unsuccessful G P in Portsmouth when he started writing detective stories and eventually completed four novels and 56 short stories featuring his famous detective. The character of Holmes, his iconic creation, has thrilled generations of crime fiction fans. The stories were serialised in magazines, leaving newly middle-class readers avid for each new episode, so much so that there was a huge outcry when Conan Doyle tried to kill him off.

The story is narrated by Holmes' associate Dr Watson, a caring foil to his intimidating and highly intelligent friend.

Dr Watson is concerned with Holmes' wellbeing, discouraging him from his opium addiction and supporting his efforts to solve an apparently insoluble crime. Watson falls in love with the young woman at the heart of the story, but fears that the likelihood of her inheriting a vast treasure will raise her above him.

As for the plot, the twist and turns rival any of those found in modern thrillers such as 'Vigil', so I was relieved when our discussion ranged around the character of Holmes himself and that of his almost equally famous creator. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was a larger-than-life personage in his own right, dabbling in spiritualism and politics and also the so called 'fairy hoax' photograph.

However, it is his masterly creation who has been the inspiration of thousands of detective stories. Sherlock Holmes has proved to be the literary character most portrayed in film and T V history.

This book features one of Holmes most celebrated statements: "... when you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth?"

Elementary my dear Watson.

With many thanks to Lorna for hosting the meeting and providing refreshments.

Our October meeting will be held at Gillian's, and we will be discussing "Climbing the Mango Trees" by Madhur Jaffrey.

Toni Carr

LUNCHEON GROUP



I think it is fair to say that our September get-together at Yarm Road Fish and Chip Shop Restaurant was a great success.
21 members attended and many commented on the quality of the food, value for money, the clean, comfortable surroundings and friendly, attentive staff. I have been asked to put it on our "regulars" list & we will definitely return in the New Year. Thanks to Sue Clark for the recommendation.

For our October meeting on Friday 30th October at 1pm, we will return to TRE AMICI in Skinnergate.

PLEASE NOTE this date falls within Darlington Restaurant Week so their "Happy Hour" menu will be replaced by a special Restaurant Week menu - I should have copies at the main meeting although WE DO NOT HAVE TO CHOOSE OUR MEALS BEFORE WE ARRIVE. The Al a Carte menu will still be available MINUS wraps. I will just take names at our monthly meeting on 13th October.

EARLY NOTIFICATION of our NOVEMBER LUNCH GROUP Meeting which will take place at Maxine's Restaurant in Bannatyne's Hotel on Friday 27th November at 1pm.
I have been asked by several members if we could return as this is OUR LAST LUNCH GROUP OF THE YEAR because our u3a Christmas Event is happening in December.
I will have copies of the varied (Christmas Fayre) menu at the monthly meeting. Before then I will check on when we have to record our choices and pay for it either as a deposit or in full .
2 courses £28, 3 courses £32.

Stella Barnes

An important reminder. If you sign up to come to the Luncheon Club and then find you can no longer attend, please let me know in advance so appropriate cancellations can be made.

SCRABBLE GROUP



Held on 2nd and 4th Mondays at The Travellers Rest in Cockerton. All abilities are welcome. We are currently almost full, but if enough people are interested a second group could be formed.

Brenda Ellidge

ITALIAN CONVERSATION

We have 16-17 in the group and find learning Italian fun, rewarding and interesting - though sometimes quite challenging! Over recent sessions we have learnt how to: describe clothes; talk about aches and pains; describe our daily routines; book a room at a hotel. We can have short conversations in Italian - and usually have lots of giggles!
Our sessions in the Autumn are in the Newcastle BS on Mondays from 10am to 11am on these dates:
19.10.26 - 26.10.26
9.11.26 - 30.11.26
14.12.26
The group is now better for Intermediate rather than Beginner learners of the language.
Celia Howarth

BRIDGE CLUB

Our friendly Bridge Group meets in The Travellers Rest in Cockerton at 1.30 on 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month. We are a noncompetitive and supportive group. If you would like to improve your play by joining our group, please contact Kay Walker or Jackie Roberts

Exciting News about Trips in 2027

In 2027, I will be working with Lee's Coaches to source some exciting trips for our membership. This is how it will work – members who are interested in any of the trips listed below will register with me. I will transfer your names to Lee's Coaches. You will then me when you need to make payments. If we have 8 members or over, we will receive a small discount. All trips will be a Lee's Coaches visit not an exclusive u3a trip so they will give you all the instructions you will need to enjoy the day. Pick up and drop off will be at the Dolphin Centre.

Day	Date - 2027	Trip	Cost
Sunday	May 16th	Haworth 1940'2	£25
Saturday	June 5th	Temple Newsome House & Museum Leeds. Includes admission & Guided tour. Optional extra cream tea and sandwich, scone, jam & cream, tea or coffee £10	£38
Thursday	June 17th	Seahouses & Farne Islands	£45
Wednesday	June 30th	Yorkshire lavender & Helmsley	£32
Saturday	July 3rd	Alnwick Castle & Gardens	£53
Thursday	July 15th	Great Yorkshire Show	£58
Tuesday	July 27th	Holy Island	£23
Thursday	August 5th	Cragside House & Gardens	£45 non-national trust member £23 National Trust member
Thursday	August 19th	Harewood House	£43
Wednesday	August 25th	Cannon Hall Farm	£37
Sunday	September 19th	Grassington 1940's	£25
Thursday	September 23rd	Bridlington	£23
Saturday	October 16th	Saltire & Salt Mill	£24
Tuesday	November 23rd	Christmas at Caste Howard	£58
Thursday	December 2nd	Bamburgh at Christmas	£44
Thursday	December 9th	Alnwick Gardens Winter Light Trail	£40

Carol Boyd

Opportunities for members from Regional

St. Nicholas Cathedral, Newcastle with Organ Recital

16 November 2026

The u3a Northeast Region Events Team have arranged a visit and tour of St Nicholas Cathedral, Newcastle with the opportunity to attend an afternoon organ recital.

For over 900 years, Newcastle Cathedral – originally the Parish Church of St Nicholas – has been at the pulsing heart of Newcastle, as a place of worship and community. From its creation, rebuilding in the Medieval era and the drama of the English Civil War to the extensive remodelling across centuries, the Cathedral echoes stories and history from every corner.

The interior of the Cathedral is a visual feast of stained glass, monuments, memorials, military colours and other sculptures. Each tells a story. Following a guided tour of the Cathedral at 11am, you can further explore the Cathedral or have lunch at Cafe16 which offers lunches as well as lighter snacks.

At 1:05pm there is an opportunity to listen to an organ recital.
The organ, parts of which are over 350 years old, is exciting and colourful. Its magnificent case in the North Transept catches the eye of all who visit and serves as a striking reminder of how essential music is to the daily rhythm of this sacred space. Today's organ has over 5,600 pipes and 94 speaking stops, making it one of the largest in the North of England. Please note there is a retiring collection after the organ recital.

Meet at 10:45am outside the Cathedral's main door, St Nicholas Square, Newcastle NE1 1PF

To book a place contact Moira Stokoe or visit the website Cathedral Visit for more information



A Festival of Fun, Music and Learning.

The Festival of Fun, Music and Learning held on May 12th 2026 at Ushaw Historic House, Chapels and Gardens, DH7 7DW was such a resounding success that The Regional u3a Events Team and Committee have decided to organise a similar day in 2027.

This special day at Ushaw Historic House, Chapels and Gardens, DH7 7DW is on Wednesday 19th May 2027.

To enable this day to be a success we rely on members to contribute to the day. We had a great response from members for 2026, but we would like others to put their names forward.

Can any member, or a group of members, offer to present a workshop or an activity for everyone to enjoy? Is your expertise in eg history, geography, crafts, such as card making, genealogy, photography, calligraphy, playing an instrument, singing in a choir etc. Could you lead a walk from Ushaw Historic House? Could you give a taster session about carpet bowls, any genre of dancing, ceramics and so the list goes on.

The staff of the historic house will also be able to offer tours of the house giving an insight into its history.

Please contact Cecilia Coulson for further information

CREATIVE CORNER



The Butterfly

Lace like wings
Tattered and battered with rain & wind
Limp body exhausted
Hanging within the web
All struggling stopped
As life ebbs away
A beautiful prisoner
Trapped in a silken cell
Antennae still register
The life force fading
Twitching, then still
Vibrations along the web
Signalling almost certain death
As the spider approaches
But wait, a gentle hand
Is releasing them from the torment
Untangling the nightmare
As the spider scurries away to safety
Its dinner set free
Then up into the clear blue sky
Whirling and fluttering
The gentle breeze lifting them upwards
To live another day

Dot Hullah

The Joys of Autumn

The leaves are falling from the trees,
It's autumn once again
So, we'll look forward with great joy
To months of cold and rain.
And whilst we shiver and rub our arms
And totter through the fog
The birds are flying to Benidorm
To escape the smog.
They've heard through the Grapevine
it's warm out there
('Cos grapes are very chatty.
They talk to all the animals
Though the animals think they're
scatty.)

So, whilst we're freezing over here
The birds will fly in the sun,
Drinking wine from glasses they've
knocked over
And having drunken fun.
They can watch, amazed, at expat folk
Getting off their face,
squealing and howling on cheap plonk
As into the sea they race.
The birds can lie on sun lounges
Soaking up the weather catching every
sunny ray
On each outspread feather.
And though we call them 'bird
brained',
Here's something to discuss –
Do you think that maybe
They've got more sense than us?

Kate brown



Opportunities for Members

Made with AI

Darlington Town Mission

Enriching Elderly Lives

QUIZ FUNDRAISER!

Saturday 24 October 2026 at 7.30pm

Hurworth Grange, DL2 2BN

Teams of 6 • £6 per person

Raffle & Prizes!

All Welcome!

Please book your teams in advance by contacting, the Secretary, Penny Moon

penny.moon@darlingtontownmission.org.uk

Monthly Speakers

Oct 13	GARY BANKHEAD ON HIS TIME AS A FIREMAN
Nov 10	AGM and Talk by Newcastle Building Society
Dec 8	U3a Christmas Party

Groups on Offer

Bridge – Jackie Roberts/Kay Walker	Travellers Rest - Cockerton	1.30 -4pm every other Tuesday
Current Affairs – Gill Turnbull	Members' homes	10am-12 noon on the 3rd Monday of the month
Coffee & Chat - Pauline Noble	Salt Fish Town House	10.30-12.30am last Wednesday of each month
Creative Writing – Dot Hullah	Leader's home	10-12am first Wednesday of each month
Canasta	Travellers Rest - Cockerton	Every other Thursday
Own Craft and Chat	Newcastle building Society Community Room	9.30 untill 11.30 – last Wednesday of the month
DIY Club		Variable check with leader
Family History – Jane Laninga	Crown Street Library	2-4 2nd Friday of the month
French, Advanced Celia Howarth	Above Newcastle Building Society, Market Place	11.15 - Fortnightly
Friday Walking Judith Bryant	Park cars in Linden Ave (nearest Coniscliffe Rd end)	9.30am on the 3rd Friday of each month
Gardening Group Ann Robinson	Harroway Room – Elm Ridge Methodist Church	October to April 3rd Thursday of the month – 10 - 12
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 until 11 - Fortnightly
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	William Stead Weatherspoon's	10.30-12 on 4th Tuesday 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

Useful email addresses if you need to contact us

NAME	EMAIL ADDRESS	REASONS
Dot Hullah		Anything to do with the running of our u3a or advise and help in general.
Dot Hullah		Anything you wish to contribute to the monthly newsletter
Penny Moon		Administration queries
Sue Clark		Any financial queries
Ann Robinson		Anything to do with Membership including yearly fees
Jenny Hurt		Any queries with regards to social events
Dave Cooke		Any queries to do with our groups, including new groups and availability of groups
Carol Boyd		Any welfare matters