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Monthly Meeting

1 OCTOBER 2024 at 2:00 pm

at the Mart

The Reivers

given by Max Loth

Teaching Fellow in the History Department at Durham University

A cultural historian of modern East-Central Europe, specialising in twentieth-century Polish history. His primary area of expertise is the social and cultural history of modern Poland. He is also keen to promote engagement with history beyond the world of academia, and to this end delivers a varied programme of talks to a range of local community groups and history societies.

Border reivers were raiders along the Anglo-Scottish border from the late 13th century to the beginning of the 17th century. They included both Scottish and English people, and they raided the entire border country without regard to their victims' nationality. Their heyday was in the last hundred years of their existence, during the time of the House of Stuart in Scotland and the House of Tudor in England.

*If you miss the Monthly Meeting you will be able to view the talk
with the video link that will be emailed to all members*

Tynedale u3a Membership Renewal

There has been a superb response to the requests to renew – the date was September 1st and we have had well over 400 renewals with the relevant payments to the third week of the month.

But about 170 members still need to send in a form and make a payment

The easiest way to do this is through the membership page on the website -

<https://tynedale.u3asite.uk/membership/>

There is an online form, which when completed and you push 'submit' automatically comes over.
Please note, the form does not allow payment, which needs to be done separately.

If there have been no changes to your contact details, such as address and phone number, you can simply fill in the basic information

The basic renewal subscription is £14.00 per person.

If you wish to receive the National u3a magazine, Third Age Matters, this has now gone up to £17.80 – it just reflects the increased cost of postage

For Bank Transfer -

Pay to Tynedale u3a: Sort code: 20-40-09: Account: 60601209:

For renewals, the reference is your membership **number** and surname. (The 'reference' makes it much easier for us to process your renewal.)

If sending a paper form and a cheque, please don't forget to make it out to "Tynedale u3a"

I'll be at the Monthly Meeting on October 1st, so happy to take cheques and forms then if that is easiest. If your contact details have not changed, just tell me that and bring the cheque


John Dark, Membership Secretary

Author Event 24th October at 2:00pm in the Great Hall of Hexham Abbey

This is a reminder of the event mentioned in the last newsletter when Henrietta Heald will give a talk on 'The Magician of the North' and 'Magnificent Women'. The Magician is William Armstrong who was the man who built Craggside, as well as being a visionary, engineer and scientist. One of the Magnificent Women is Rachel Parsons (1885-1956) who lived in both Ryton and Wylam and was a key figure in the Women's Engineering Society.

The meeting is being hosted by Book Group 4 and you will be asked for a small voluntary contribution.

Julie Madgwick, Convenor



There are still vacancies on the committee for an **Events Secretary** and a **Publicity Officer**

Please contact Barrie Mellars
by calling him 07831255520 or
emailing him at chairtu3a@gmail.com

or chat to any of the committee at the Monthly Meeting

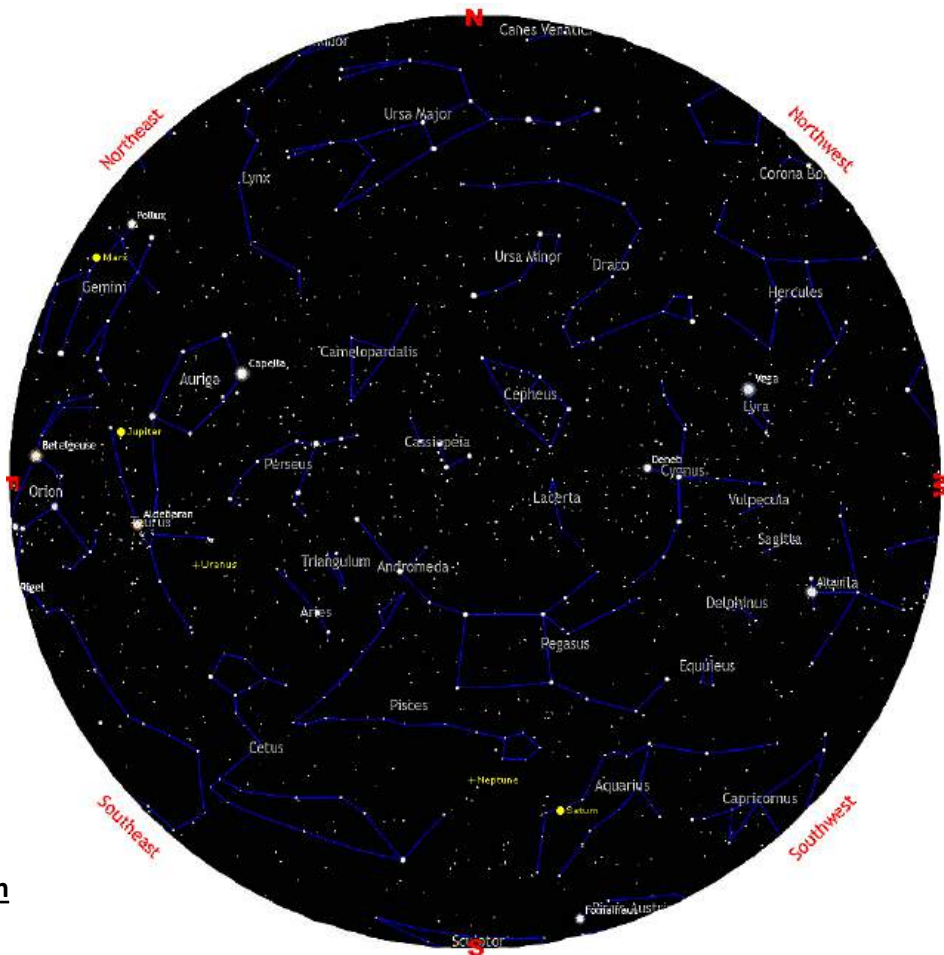
Like any voluntary organisation Tynedaleu3a can only work if members are willing to help through membership of the committee and becoming convenors of groups. As our numbers increase so do the demands for more activities and groups. These all have to be coordinated and supported through the committee.

Please give serious thought as to whether or not you can actively support the work of Tynedaleu3a by joining the committee.

Empowering Language

The language we use to describe ourselves and others is very important in determining how we see ourselves. It can also help us to live longer and have richer more fulfilling lives. So, when you've got 30 minutes to spare, listen to the BBC Radio 4 *Word of Mouth* podcast with Dr Lucy Pollock <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m0022cm5>. We're wise, experienced and much much more so good listening!

Mike Foster



Things to see this month

The ISS

There will be a number of chances of seeing the ISS track across the night sky from west to east. It sits at an altitude of 249 miles (400km) above the earth and is travelling at 17500 mph (28000 kph) taking about 90 minutes to complete an orbit. It shows as a very bright fast-moving spot of light which is the sun reflecting from the solar panels. For more exact info on timings see the website <https://spotthestation.nasa.gov/>

Partial Solar Eclipse

Shortly after 10am (UK time) on the morning of 25 October, the Moon's path around Earth takes it almost directly between the Sun and our planet, significantly reducing the amount of light reaching us.

In the north of the UK around a third of the Sun's disc will be eclipsed by the Moon. To see the Moon obscuring the Sun there will be an unobstructed view to the south-east (don't forget a safety filter, never look directly at the sun with the naked eye). The point of greatest eclipse will take place shortly before 11am, around an hour after the event begins. The Moon will then gradually move away, uncovering the Sun over the following hour.

Jupiter is the brightest planet you will see which is not surprising given that it is an enormous gas giant some 1300times larger than the earth. Indeed it is twice as massive as all the other planets put together.

Mars which will soon be at its closest point to Earth and is clearly visible with its characteristic red tinge.

Saturn may also be seen but you will need a telescope to view its spectacular rings.

Although Neptune and Uranus are shown on the map, they are not visible to the naked eye.

Meteors

The Draconids meteor shower peaks around 8-9 October and will see fragments of debris from Comet Giacobini-Zinner entering our atmosphere. They appear slow(!) but are travelling at 13 miles/sec and are quite faint in comparison with the fragments from Halley's Comet that make up the Orionids meteor shower that will enter our atmosphere at around 66 kilometres (40 miles) per second. This meteor shower is active all month and peaks in the relatively moonless nights around 21-22 October.

Good stargazing! Barrie Mellors

Funding For Group Organised Meetings

Tynedale u3a committee currently organises and funds a monthly meeting that is open to all its members. Until recently there has been no request to fund meetings organised by groups from within Tynedale u3a.

At present, our finance policy states that groups are expected to be self-financing and can collect such sums of money as the group members and leadership deem to be necessary to undertake their activities. The funds of these groups belong to Tynedale u3a. Groups are permitted to incur relevant costs deemed necessary by the group members and the group leadership; however, groups are not allowed to engage paid tutors to support the running of their groups. Reasonable expenses can be paid to external tutors and speakers as set out in the Group Finance Policy, but all costs must be paid for from the specific group's funds.
(Tynedale u3a finance policy para. 6)

Following a request for support from the convenor of Book 4 group the issue of providing financial support for groups in Tynedale u3a wishing to organise meetings that have a wider appeal beyond their own specific group was discussed at the July committee meeting.

It was concluded that where a group wishes to organise a meeting that has an appeal beyond their own specific group, i.e. one which would be of demonstrably wider interest to a significant number of other groups and be open to the whole Tynedale u3a membership, then the Committee may be willing to consider contributing to the cost of that meeting. The originating group would retain responsibility (financial and otherwise) for the meeting.

The committee agreed the following protocol for handling such requests:

- A. The organiser should let the committee know that the group wishes to hold such a meeting.
 - B. This should include details of the speaker, subject, venue, date and time.
 - C. The committee will need to know the amount of funding the group requires.
 - D. The meeting must be open to all members of Tynedale u3a.
 - E. It is the organisers responsibility to inform all members. This may be done either through the newsletter or Tynedale u3a website. In addition, the Facebook Group may also be used.
 - F. Any costs incurred that are over and above the amount the committee awards are the responsibility of the organiser.
-

Decline of the Internet

A frequent topic in the discussions at various U3A groups often centre around the decline of the Internet and social media over the last 10 years. We now have an excess of misinformation and that includes social media which is meant to be moderated. Social media also has algorithms that deliberately promote arguments and discord.

As buyers, we can often no longer find the product we want to buy but some inferior or irrelevant choice at the top of the search list. And that's something that disadvantages both consumers and sellers.

This decline of the Net has not gone unnoticed and we now have a new term to describe this degradation, the Enscrapification of the internet. Very apt but some might just prefer the word 'degrade'. There was a good introductory overview of this on BBC Radio 4's *Rethink* programme <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m0022z9r> Well worth a listen and why a digital detox may make life happier.

Mike Foster

Autumn is here, so time to fall about laughing before winter misery sets in....

- Q: Why do birds fly south in the fall? *Because it's too far to walk.*
- Q: What did a tree fighting with autumn say? *That's it, I'm leaving.*
- Q: How do trees get on the internet? *They log in!*
- Q: I heard Humpty Dumpty had a great summer... *But he had a horrible fall!*
- Q: Why did the turkey cross the road? *Because it was the chicken's day off.*
- Q: If money really did grow on trees, what would be everyone's favorite season? *Fall.*
- Q: What do you call a large colorful pile of leaves? *The Great Barrier Leaf.*
- Q: What's the ratio of a pumpkin's circumference to its diameter? *Pumpkin Pi*
- Q: Which monster is red, round and only comes out in the autumn? *Frankenapple!*
- Q: What happens when winter arrives? *Autumn leaves!*

(Taken from www.easyfamilyfun.com)

Group News and Visits

Urban Sketchers Group

"Show and Tell" at the first meeting of our urban Sketchers group! We met up at the Refectory cafe, scattered and met again to applaud others' efforts!

To avoid clashes with other meetings and busy Fridays in the town we are proposing: weekly 2pm Monday afternoon meetings for four weeks from 23rd September to enable as many people as possible to drop in. Then we suggest we review meeting times and frequency.

In the meantime, bearing in mind the colder months coming, I'll investigate public places where a group would be welcome to sketch indoors



First meeting of an urban sketchers group courtesy of U3A took place this afternoon 16th September (2-3.30pm) outside at the Refectory Cafe. Joanna and I are proposing three alternatives for future meetings, Monday am, Monday pm or Friday am every other week.

If you are interested please indicate what times work for you, and which fortnightly schedule would suit you, bearing in mind any other U3A groups you attend. We'll endeavour to find a time that works for the maximum number of people.

If we have no new takers we'll meet again same time, same place in a fortnight.

If you're interested it would be helpful if you gave us your email address) mobile number so we could communicate via email and/or WhatsApp. Look forward to hearing from you

The convenors name is Liz Sterland aka Liz Kampman on Facebook.

Group News and Visits

On 6th August, twelve u3a members representing the Environment, Geology and Landscape groups visited Moss Peteral Farm near Greenhead.



The farm is sandwiched between Hadrian's Wall and Kielder Forest and is noted for its internationally important areas of peat bogs and mires.

Our 'Beef, Bogs and Biodiversity' farm tour started with a warm welcome from farmer Sue Seymour, plus coffee and homemade biscuits. This was followed by a very informative talk on the farm, its livestock (White Galloway cattle, Cheviot and mule sheep, bronze turkeys) and resident wildlife; how bogs and mires are formed; and ongoing and future environmental improvements.

The farm has recently received substantial funding through a new Country Stewardship Agreement to guarantee the future of the peat bogs through extensive work to block old drainage ditches, create new dams and rebuild stone walls. There are also plans to plant 8ha of trees along the banks of the Tipalt Burn through the Woodland Creation scheme and to enhance the farm's flower-rich hay meadows.

Sue then led us on a walk to experience the peatlands in all their glory! Although the going was quite rough and tussocky, the sun shone and the views were amazing. First stop was on a small hill overlooking The Wou, an extensive area of bog and mire and a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

We then stopped to study a smaller bog in more detail. It was certainly wet and wellies were essential! We measured the depth of the peat using poles (approximately 4.5 metres, equivalent to 4,500 years of carbon sequestration) and spotted some bog specialist plants such as sundew and bog asphodel.

On our return to the farm, we admired the newly restored field, a cross-shaped sheep shelter, typical of farms in west Northumberland/Cumbria.

Our visit was rounded off with a delicious lunch of Moss Peteral meatballs (with veggie options), homemade flatbread and salad followed by ice cream from a local farm!



Thank you to Sue, Alan and Simon for a truly fascinating, informative and enjoyable day!

Deidre Dodd



Group News and Visits

Hadrian's Wall Group

Members combined on a gloriously sunny Monday to visit the Roman Fort of Epiacum near Alston. A warm wind assisted us up a steep path to the site. En route, our guide Elaine, the wife of the current farmer, took us to view a couple of bastle, or bastille houses that are a type of fortified farmhouse, found along the Anglo-Scottish border, in the areas formerly plagued by border reivers.

One particularly is of note as it illustrates the life and need of such structures in these remote areas, with a well curated audio visual display. Onto the platform of the fort, the surrounding countryside is stunning.



Epiacum fort is most appreciated for its intact ditches surrounding the fort. The area has been farmed for centuries, but because it's not been used for arable purposes, these ditches were never flattened, and so the sheep happily graze them, leaving no trace of their presence. What cobwebs we may have had on us before visiting the site were absolutely blown away by a gusty warm wind, and we returned to the Nook cafe on the site for a hot drink.

Carole Soulsby Co-Convenor of History and Hadrian's Wall Groups



Group News and Visits

Environment Group – September 2024 Meeting

This month's meeting saw us back in the Newcastle Building Society Community Room, following two field trips in place of our meetings in July and August.

The topic this month was Climate Change and the measures to combat it that are being undertaken by Northumberland County Council. We were treated to a talk from Hannah Davison, Senior Climate Change and Sustainability Manager with the Climate Change Team at Northumberland County Council.

Once the Climate Emergency was declared in 2019, a carbon neutral target was set by many regions in the country, including Northumberland. Here the emphasis was on meeting this target by fostering sequestration of Carbon Dioxide, especially through our extensive deposits of peat, and large areas of forestry.

In addition, the Climate Change team identified areas of priority where emissions might be reduced – especially through improving waste services, and funding schemes for home insulation and airflow measures.

Waste Services

While Northumberland has an ongoing contract with Suez for waste and recycling, issues have changed in recent years – such as the increasing need to recycle food waste and the proliferation of plastics. Both of these are to be addressed over the next five years.

- The 2021 Environment Act will soon bring in legislation that will charge producers for over-use of plastic packaging, and that will introduce a deposit /returns scheme on bottles.
- A glass collection trial will be undertaken in the coming year; the Council is currently determining the necessary frequency of collection, which has an impact on costs.
- In 2026 the council will begin a food waste collection. Each household will have a kitchen caddy for food waste, which will be collected each week. The waste will be used for anaerobic digestion that will ultimately generate energy and gas.

When it comes to food waste, the council anticipates a change in public behaviour over time. For, once they come face to face with the amount they collect each week, people might produce less.

The council is not without its critics of these plans. Some people are opposed to collecting food waste; in the trial, one resident complained that they needed all their waste to feed a friendly badger.

New Climate Action Plan 2024-2026

The Council's new Action Plan (***see the next page***) encompasses the three areas of Society, the Environment and Emissions. In so doing, it has developed its remit to now recognise the current ecological emergency. Measures to combat this and improve biodiversity are now being undertaken across a wide range of Council teams – from Environmental Protection and Ecological teams to the Great Northumberland Forest team and the Rural Growth team.

Current areas of research include the potential of grasslands for sequestration, and the food cycle. Within the latter, local community growing schemes are being established and people are being encouraged to eat locally. But there are difficulties to be overcome. For instance, currently there is no abattoir in Northumberland and sheep are shipped to North Wales for slaughter, which is obviously both detrimental to the sheep and to the environment.

Methane is one of the biggest emission problems currently being addressed by the County Council. A target to reduce all greenhouse gases to net zero 2024 has been adopted. It's an ambitious target, but it is one that must be met for all our sakes.

The environment group meets every third Tuesday morning of the month at 10.30 a.m. We welcome new members, so please let me know through the contact link on the website's group page should you wish to join us.

Next month we will be looking at poo (but not in any literal sense). We hope you can come along.

Liz Barnes

What are NCCs targets for climate change action?



Northumberland county council is a carbon dioxide neutral organisation by 2030



NCC pledges to work with government to make Northumberland carbon dioxide neutral by 2030

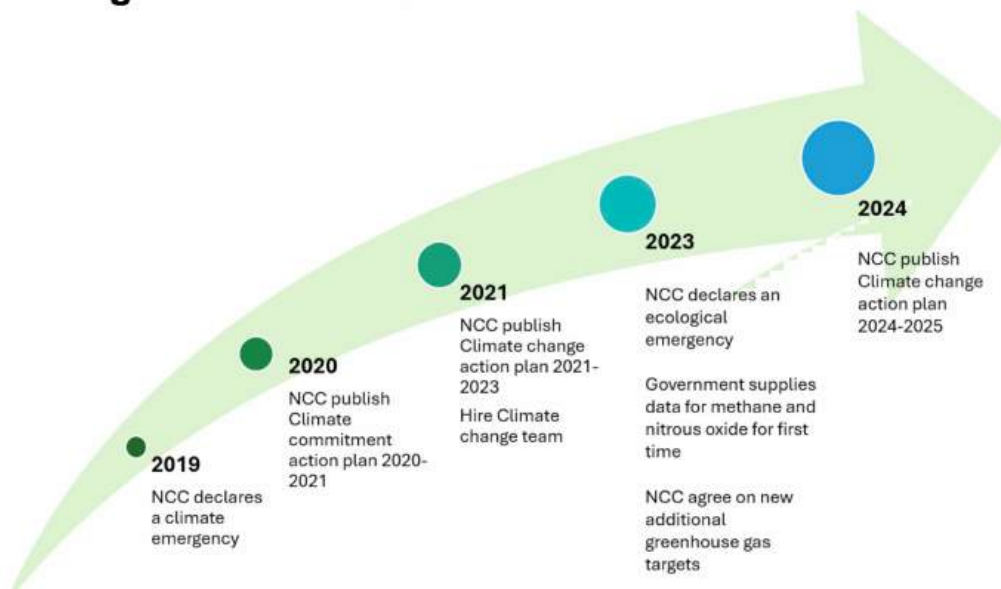


NCC pledges to work with government to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions for the county of Northumberland by 2040.

Northumberland
NET ZERO



Climate change action at NCC



Your committee

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Membership

598 Members
13 Associates



A VERY WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Richard Liston
Andrew Gavaghan
John Hope
Mary Burgess

Brian Walters
Lindsay Booth
Mary Christer

Next issue of the newsletter

We very much welcome written contributions and photos from groups and individual members.

Please send your contributions to the newsletter editor, Tim O'Brien, at tyneu3anleditor@gmail.com

Thank you and I look forward to hearing from you.....


The November Newsletter deadline is 24 October

Forthcoming Monthly Meetings Topics and Speakers

5 November 2024
The Rocks at the Edge of the Empire
given by Ian Jackson

3 December 2024
Origins of Xmas Traditions
given by Colin Argent

We do hope you have enjoyed this edition of the Newsletter
Please join us on the **Tynedale u3a Facebook** page to keep up to date with information on events, interesting comments from members and engaging photos.

 **Follow us on Facebook**