

## MORPETH AND DISTRICT NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2024

Welcome to your September newsletter. September is the start of a 'new' year for our u3a with a new Membership booklet and a new programme of General Meetings.

Our programme starts with Mhairi McWilliam talking about Volunteering with Oxfam. This is at 2.00 24<sup>th</sup> September at St James's.

We have a new Committee but the problem is that we are mainly the same old faces – we do need more members to help out. As the saying goes – many hands make light work.

Also new is our website which Lena Walsh and I have been working on over the summer. It is now up and running. To access it put <https://morpethanddistrict.u3asite.uk> into your search.

You will see that the new site is cleaner and simpler to use. Over the next few weeks we will be adding to it but please let us know what you think. I know the website in the past has mainly been accessed by prospective members – we also want it to be a useful resource for our current members.

Please remember to bring a cup if you are staying for refreshments at General Meetings.

Steve Morris, Chair

### News from the Groups – September 2024

#### **Art Group:**



We meet at Pegswood Community Hub, Longhirst Road, Pegswood NE61 1XF most Monday afternoons during the year between 1.30-3.30 pm. During the summer break we usually work outdoors at various local venues. There is some car parking on the site and facilities to make tea/coffee etc.

The Art Group continues to thrive, enriched by the contributions of new members who have joined recently. We would welcome others who would like to share their talent. The picture in the Newsletter was painted by one of our members. For more information please contact our Group Coordinators

## Art Appreciation Group:



We meet on the second last Thursday of the month at 2.00pm at Morpeth Methodist Church and look forward to welcoming new and existing members. We have a mixture of DVDs and presentations followed by discussions and by tea or coffee.

In June the group joined up with the Mid-Northumberland Art Appreciation Group for a trip to the Great Tapestry of Scotland in Galashiels. Members enjoyed studying the numerous panels depicting the birth and growth of Scotland. The craftsmanship was astonishing and the variety and range of designs was outstanding.

This year's programme starts on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> September at 2pm in Morpeth Methodist Church when Chris Tipple will give a talk entitled "Tyne to Tweed".

For more information please contact our Group Coordinators

## Book Group 4:

Our Group had a break in August as many members were on holiday, so we took advantage of the extra time to read a rather longer and non-fiction book, *The Marches* by Rory Stewart. We will reconvene as usual on the 2nd Thursday of the month at 2pm in one another's homes and would welcome new members. For more information please contact our Group Coordinators

## Book Group 5:

Book Group 5 meets every second Thursday of each month at 2pm at a member's house. Last month we read Susannah Gregory's "The Little House" and this month we have Jojo Moyes' "The One plus One". Our books come from the Northumberland Book Group Libraries and we do get a choice of books. If anyone would like to join us they are very welcome. For more information please contact our Group Coordinators

### **Book Group 6:**

Our group is quite small at present and we would welcome one or two new members. We meet at 2pm on the second Friday of each month, usually in one another's homes, although sometimes we change the venue. We read mostly modern fiction, taking turns to choose the book to be discussed. For more information please contact our Group Coordinators

### **Craft Group:**



The Craft Group continues to meet on a Monday at 2pm in the Sun Inn, our first meeting after the summer break being on the 2<sup>nd</sup> September. People had still crafted at home during the holiday and one of our group had a huge bag of hats and scarves to take to my friend who still organises the shoe box Xmas appeal. Another member is knitting patterns for a duck supplied by the Creative Studio on Newgate Street. Children who have cancer are given a duck and get a set of clothes for it each time they have chemo. Poppies were also knitted for the WI for a display they are having at their regional office in Seaton Burn.

For more information please contact our Group Coordinators

### **Foodies Lunch Club:**

We have continued to meet over the summer. In July we had a most enjoyable lunch at The Cook & Barker which is well known to a number of members and never fails to produce meals of a high quality. We returned to Ephesus in Morpeth in August which was excellent. Our three course meal was delicious and very good value for money. Being under new ownership, it is well worth a visit.

On Monday 16<sup>th</sup> September we are going to The Snowy Owl, near Cramlington. Members have already signed up for this lunch. However, if you would like to join us on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> October at The Block and Tackle, Ashington, NE93 8NW, you can sign up at the September lunch or at the General Meeting on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> September. Looking forward to seeing you again soon and hope you have had a pleasant summer despite the changeable weather! For more information please contact our Group Coordinators

### **French Conversation:**

Bonjour mes amis. Parlez-vous francais? If you do, and would like to keep up your French, why not join us? All levels of French are acceptable as we are here to help each other. We read and translate a bit of French to improve on accents and develop vocabulary. We chat about what we have been doing in the past month and usually end up playing a word game or a game of cards with all comments and conversation in French of course. Our Group meets on the first Wednesday of each month at 10.30 am for about an hour. It is held in my home. If you are interested in joining us or knowing more, you can contact our Group Coordinators

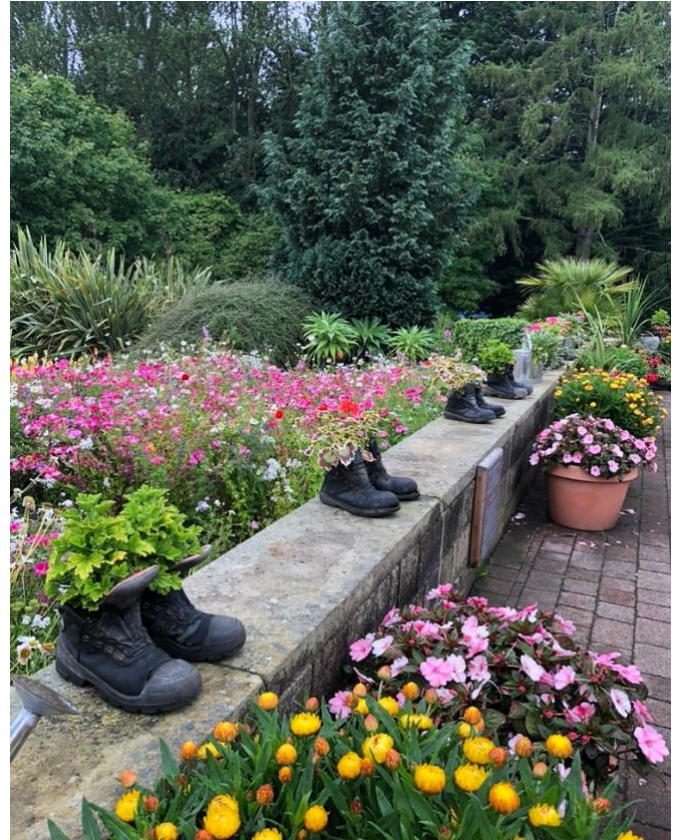
### **Garden Group:**

Our meetings take place at 2pm in Hepscoth Parish Hall on the second Wednesday of each month apart from of June and July when we plan some garden visits and August when there is no meeting. We usually have a speaker followed by refreshments, so we request £3 per person to cover hall hire, speaker fee and refreshments. Our meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> September will be a talk by John Halliday "A year in the life of Roe Deer". Everyone is welcome, so please come along and join us.

In June we visited Cresswell Walled Garden which was stunning – beautifully restored and well maintained. It looked much more established than I had envisaged. Barry and Steve were very knowledgeable and entertaining when they guided us around the garden and Pele Tower. I think we would all recommend a visit and note that they are involved in Heritage Open Days in September – [www.heritageopendays.org.uk](http://www.heritageopendays.org.uk)

In July we were lucky with the weather following some very rainy days when a small group visited Durham Botanical Gardens. We enjoyed the extensive and different parts of the garden and greenhouses.

If you need further information please contact our Group Coordinators



### **German Conversation:**

Our group meets once a month at my house. We use a mixture of material available on the internet to improve vocabulary and understanding and finish with either general conversation or a member talking about a topic. It is not a class, it is light-hearted and a fun way of improving language skills. If you are interested in joining the group, please contact our Group Coordinators

### **History Group:**

The History Group has continued meeting throughout the summer. After a recent talk in June we visited the Ad Gefrin museum in Wooler and the site in Kirknewton. In July we had a talk on Captain Bligh, who had a very interesting life. In August we had a talk on Peru, its history and places. The speaker had recently been to Peru and she showed us many locally made objects that she brought back with her which the group enjoyed seeing and handling

Our group is full at the moment but, if you are interested, please let me know and I will put your name on a waiting list. For more information, please contact our Group Coordinators

### **Music for Pleasure:**

The group meets in a member's home on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month at 2pm and chooses a different subject or genre of music each month. Every member brings a CD of music of their choice to fit into that category, so there is a real variety. In July we listened to music from Wales and, in August, from Ireland. September will be one member's choice.

For more information, please contact our Group Coordinators

### **Play Reading Group:**

Do you enjoy reading plays? I find that reading them out loud in a group is more fun than reading on your own. We read plays which are usually obtained from the library. We read a wide selection of plays, some humorous, some more serious, but we usually enjoy them. If you would like to try it, our group meets at 2pm on the first Tuesday afternoon of each month at my home for about an hour.

If you are interested in joining us or knowing more, please contact our Group Coordinators

### **Quiz Group:**

Our group meets every month on the second Thursday of the month at 2pm at St. Christopher's Morpeth. We have a light-hearted approach to quizzing and are always happy to welcome new members. Do come along and see if it suits you. For more information, please contact our Group Coordinators for more information.

### **Scrabble Group 2 (Monday)**

The Monday Scrabble Group continues with four very enthusiastic members. We meet every alternate Monday at 10 am usually in the home of one of our group and are discovering new words all the time. Anyone interested in joining us would be very welcome.

Please contact our Group Coordinators for more information.

### **Scrabble Group 1 (Tuesday)**

The Group meets at the Anchor Housing Complex in Kirkhill, Morpeth on Tuesday afternoons at 2pm (except when the U3A has its monthly meetings). We are an enthusiastic group, and would welcome new members to come and share our enjoyment of this fascinating word game. Please contact our Group Coordinators for more information.

### **Tai Chi Group:**

We are starting a new 12 week block on September 4<sup>th</sup>. We do a mixture of Tai Chi and Qigong focusing on health and relaxation. We also look at some aspects of Chinese culture and tradition that underpin Tai Chi. Sessions are fun, sociable and very relaxing. There is an expectation that members can attend all or most of the sessions in a block. We meet every Wednesday at 10.30 am at St Christopher's at Kirkhill. Contact our Group Coordinators for more information.

### **Theatre Group:**

The next production on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> December is a matinee at 1.30 of a cinema showing on the big screen of **Andre Rieu - A Christmas Spectacular**. The venue will be the Phoenix Theatre in Blyth. The cost will be £15.50 per person, plus extra for the coach. Could those wishing to go please fill out the interest list at the next meeting. Money for the visit will be taken at the October meeting. Please have cash or cheque in an envelope clearly marked with your name. For more information please contact our Group Coordinators

### **Walking Groups:**

#### Longer Walking Group (approx. 8 miles)

The longer walking group meets on the third Tuesday of the month at the Morpeth Rugby Club car park for a 9.30am start. Our walk on 17<sup>th</sup> September will be led by Jenny Ellis and our next walk on 15<sup>th</sup> October will be led by Diane Aynsley. Further dates and leaders will be published in future newsletters. Our walks are approximately 8 miles long and take place in Northumberland and the Tyne Valley. You will need waterproof clothing, walking boots and a picnic lunch and drink. For further information please contact our Group Coordinators

#### 5 Mile Walking Group

The 5 Mile Group meets at Morpeth Rugby Club car park for a 9.30am start on the 2nd Tuesday of the month. We are a friendly group and one member each month is responsible for the walk. Walking shoes and a light snack are recommended. We would welcome anyone who would like to join us. We don't do strenuous walks and find time to admire the countryside – and enjoy it when one of the group can tell us the name of such and such a plant or a bit of history. Come on - find those walking shoes and join us!

Contact our Group Coordinators for more information.

#### Amblers

We normally meet on the first Thursday of each month at 10am at Morpeth Rugby Club and share cars. Our last meeting was on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> September when the group drove to Hadston Scaurs car park near Druridge Bay for a beach walk. Lunch was at Widdrington Inn. Thanks to Linda for organising and leading the walk as I couldn't be there.

New members are always welcome. For more information, please contact our Group Coordinators