

GRAY MATTERS

Well, weather-wise, it's not been such a bad winter so far, has it? We've also had a couple of heart-warming events of late, involving u3a members. There was a great response, over £512, to Marian and Phil McNichol's coffee and cake morning in aid of the Turkish/Syrian earthquake appeal. I know you don't have to be a u3a member to qualify as a good egg but it's significant how many of you are to be seen at gatherings such as this. And well done, Marian and Phil!



Another case in point was the illustrated 'Ukraine & Russia' (spit!) talk given by photographer Tim Smith in Victoria Hall, where donations/ticket sales amounted to £575. I expect there'll be a similar turn-out of worthy folk at VH at 7pm on Tuesday, March 28th to see 'Mr Jones', a film about the 1930's Ukrainian famine, starring Happy Valley's James Norton, but also to donate more to the current brave battle on our behalf.

What a wonderful facility the Victoria Hall is! We've recently been treated to streaming of 'The Crucible', 'The Barber of Seville' and 'Othello'. Marvellous! All credit to Ann Harding and her team, some of whom are of course volunteers and u3a members to boot. I rest my case.

Another Shakespeare delight was a modern, somewhat quirky 'Henry V' at Leeds Playhouse, where characters introduced themselves at each entry. I wish they'd adopt this tactic in complicated TV dramas or maybe wear a name-badge prominently on their chests. The last scene of 'Henry V' was not penned by Good Will, if any of it was, but took the form of Katharine, Henry's French, ie immigrant fiancée, being grilled by a UK Citizenship Test. How we laughed!

I quote a final thought on Shakespeare from ex-Dalesman, Bill Bryson. In his book, 'Mother Tongue: The English Language', he points out that, had William's father, John, not moved to Stratford-on-Avon before his son's birth, we would now pay homage to the Bard of Snitterfield.

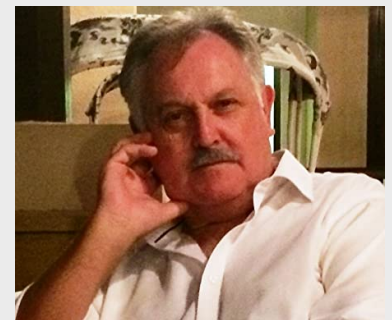
Ian Gray sdu3a.chair@gmail.com

u3a
Settle District

MONTHLY MEETING

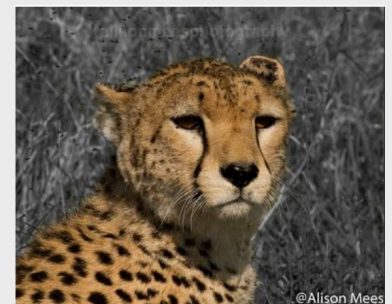
2nd Thursday of the
month, 10 for 10.30am
at St John's and by Zoom

Thursday 9 March
Barrow to Baghdad and
back again
by Philip Caine



The author of the Jack Castle novels recounts his experiences in hotels, the oil industry and the Middle East

Thursday 13 April
Meeting delivered by
zoom to the hall



Living the African Dream
by Alison Mees

COMMITTEE NEWS

There have been several changes to the committee since our last newsletter 'Who's who'. In case you don't know us already here we are! *Front Row:* Les Chandler (secretary), Ian Gray (chair) Barbara Herring (treasurer), Chris Barnes (monthly speaker programme), *Middle Row:* Sue Ashwell, Mary Leahy (publicity), Colin Ashwell, Jeanne Hine (groups coordinator) Kathy Parker (membership), *Back inserts:* Sarah Lister (newsletter), David Uren.



Emergency Contacts: Obviously we need to give you the opportunity to give us an emergency contact, just in case. We'll be adding this to the membership application form and contacting existing members soon. Any queries email Kathy, our Membership Secretary on sdu3a.membership@gmail.com tel: 07963 776924.

New bank details: As the HSBC bank in Settle has closed and to avoid charges we have moved our bank account to NatWest. We'll make sure we remind you of this at renewal time and include the new bank account details on the membership form. If you were planning to make a donation before then please contact our treasurer, Barbara Herring on su3a.treasurer@gmail.com for details.

Newsletter: During the worst of Covid we hand-delivered newsletters to members who don't have email. Now that we are hopefully through the worst, paper copies will be available at monthly meetings, just as before, so please collect your copy from there.

Getting Involved: Thanks, as always, to our wonderful group leaders and all those that help in other ways, collecting monies, making drinks at meetings, putting up posters... the list is endless. We'd always love to hear from anyone interested in setting up a new group (with full support of course) or to join the committee in an active role. In particular we still desperately need a Vice Chair and also someone interested in taking over as Chair in November. If you're not sure what this involves and would like to chat it through please get in touch with any of the committee.

BIRDWATCHING GROUP

We enjoyed a feast of birding at Glasson Dock in February. Massive flocks of waders wheeled across the water, rafts of Wigeon bobbed in the shallows, and groups of Shelduck glinted in the sunshine. Other highlights were less commonly seen birds: Kingfisher, Whooper Swans and Stock Dove. And before heading home we found a lone Pink-footed Goose.



Next month we'll be making the trip to the classic oak woodland of Barbondale, on the edge of the fells above Kirkby Lonsdale. This delightful little valley is home to a host of lovely birds. Summer visitors include special species like the Ring Ouzel, Redstart, Pied Flycatcher and Cuckoo. Recently these long-distance migrants have been turning up much earlier in the year and we'll be checking to see if they have arrived.

For more information about the u3a Birdwatching Group contact **Les Chandler** on lchandler52@gmail.com.

GROUP NEWS - FAMILY HISTORY GROUP

This month's hybrid meeting was attended by Zoomers in Australia, Spain and Texas, USA! Thanks to the Chandlers for helping with Zoom. We were treated to a fascinating talk on Sarah Lister's latest research into life at Ribbleshead during the building of the Settle to Carlisle Railway – some amazing characters! Following an introductory talk in November, after the break Ken Lister was 'in conversation with' Susan Ashwell about what she and Colin have done to develop their family tree, by learning to add people, information, images etc, skills that we could all use, with practice.

Eileen Bamford mrsbamford@aol.com

ART APPRECIATION GROUP

We have yet to decide what happens after our scheduled meeting on 7 March, but you can be sure of finding out on our little website. Our March meeting involves lots of members' contributions, a Jacob's Join with pictures instead of food. We have noted that Abbot Hall in Kendal will reopen its doors in May after a refit conveniently coinciding with the Covid pandemic. A visit there is likely. **David Holdsworth** david.holdsworth@bcs.org

GREAT LIVES

In February Debi Burridge gave an interesting talk about Isabella Bird, a Yorkshire born lady about whom nobody present had ever heard. Apart from being incredibly adventurous Isabella was a diminutive assertive Victorian female with an unconventional yet practical sense of fashion.

Born in 1831, the eldest daughter of a provocative vicar, she suffered from poor health including a spinal complaint, headaches and insomnia. To improve her condition, when she was 23, she sailed to America and wrote about her travels in the first of several books. Then she explored countries all over the world much of the time astride a horse in the days when women were expected to ride sidesaddle. She died in 1904 shortly after returning from a trip to Morocco. What a woman!



The next meeting is at 11am, Wednesday 15 March, in the Catholic Hall. Ian Gray will be presenting the life of Antoni Gaudí, Spanish architect. All welcome – including Rorie! **John Parry** jamatcv@gmail.com

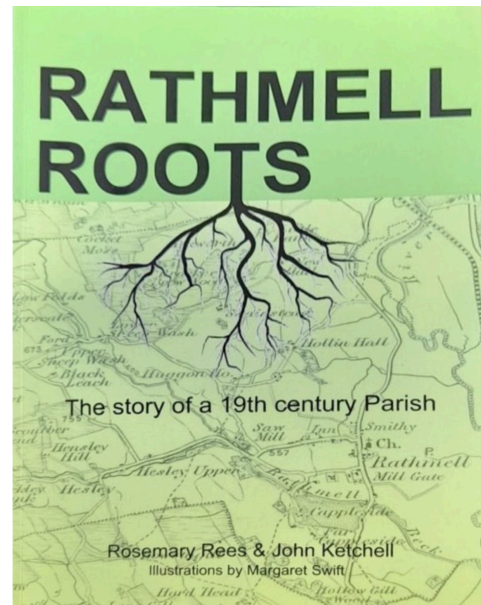
BRIDGE GROUP

Members of the Bridge group enjoyed an excellent 3 course lunch at the Limestone View cafe in January after their regular bridge session on a Thursday morning. Online sessions also run on Monday mornings – ideal for anyone who is unable to get out and about. Newcomers and anyone keen to learn are always welcome. **Barbara Herring**, email barbaraherring@hotmail.com



MEMBERS' WORK:

At the beginning of lockdown, after some pointers from Sarah Lister and the Graveyard Project, Rosemary Rees started researching the social history in Rathmell through stories from the graveyard. She has now written a book with John Ketchell, 'Rathmell Roots' available from the Folly.



MEMBERS' WORK:

Teresa Gordon, who runs our art group has teamed up with Sarah Lister from our Graveyard Project to celebrate International Women's Day which is on 8 March. Teresa has painted portraits and sketches of some of Settle's most notable women, researched by the Graveyard Project. The work is on display at The Folly until 1 July. The Graveyard Project also features in an exhibition by Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust, also at The Folly.



Thank you for newsletter items. Views expressed do not necessarily reflect the views of the editor or the committee. The deadline for the next edition, **150 words max**, is 5pm on Mon 3 April. We may edit articles

Send to sdu3a.newsletter@gmail.com