

EVENTS, VIEWS AND REPORTS

UPCOMING MONTHLY MEETINGS

SEPTEMBER MEETING LINKING LIVES Dr Gavin Young

2.15 pm Thursday 17 September at Penrith Rugby Club

Loneliness and isolation are significant problems for many people of a variety of ages throughout the UK. Dr Gavin Young is known to many as a popular and successful GP at Temple Sowerby. Now retired, he is very well qualified to understand people who have these problems. He very much enjoys his role as a befriender with our local Linking Lives project. and his talk is likely to be laced with both common sense and humour



OCTOBER MEETING CYCLING ADVENTURES Nigel Rowe

2.15 pm Thursday 15 October at Penrith Rugby Club

Nigel Rowe is a prodigious cyclist with achievements including a ride he describes as 'East from Moscow,' a long and adventurous journey. Last year he spent 8 months overseas on his bicycle ending with a Coast to Coast across Saudi Arabia. This year he has another great challenge involving crossing Bolivia and Chile. In the hope he has returned from his various ventures by the time of our meeting he will tell us more about his varied travels. It promises to be a lively and fascinating talk.



NOVEMBER MEETING

'THE LAST CHARGE' OF THE CALCUTTA LIGHT HORSE Neil Hannah

2.15 pm Thursday 19 November at Penrith Rugby Club

Neil Hannah is an accomplished speaker with a real interest in history. He will bring to life this episode about the last battle fought by a British militia in India: the Calcutta Light Horse. The action takes place not on horseback but on the high seas, and during the Second World War. Accountants, bankers, and civil servants struck an important blow for freedom at the end of British Raj. This operation was against enemy shipping and kept completely secret.



Colonel W.H. Grice

(NEW) CHAIR'S PIECE

My name is James Murdock, and I'm delighted to have recently taken on the role of Chair of Penrith U3A. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our outgoing Chair, Margaret Irving, for all her hard work and commitment during her years on the committee.

I joined U3A shortly after Covid, which happened to coincide with my retirement – so it seemed like a good time to get out and about, meet new people and try something different. I soon discovered that U3A offered plenty of opportunities to do just that.

I'm currently a member of both the Table Tennis group and the Writing for Pleasure group. They are very different activities, but both have been great ways to meet people, learn new things and, most importantly, enjoy myself.

This has been the warmest, driest and one of the most enjoyable summers in my 27 years living in Cumbria and as it draws to a close I'm looking forward to getting to know more of our members and conveners in my new role and helping Penrith U3A continue to be a friendly, active and welcoming organisation.

James Murdock

JUNE AGM and 30TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

The June monthly meeting was preceded by an extremely well attended AGM at which another successful year was celebrated in this our 30th Anniversary year. Two new committee members were elected - Angela Power & Yvette Bradley, as well as a new chair, James Murdock. Please see the list of committee members and their roles below.

The retiring Chair and former Secretary and Treasurer, Margaret Irving, and the Monthly Meeting coordinator and former Vice Chair, Sue Tomlinson, were presented with gifts thanking them for their work and commitment over a total of 8 and 12 years respectively as trustees.

To mark the 30th anniversary, a large audience was treated to a celebratory tea at the AGM. One of the earliest members of Penrith and North Lakes u3a, John Upson, spoke of the launch of the Penrith branch in 1996 and then cut the celebratory cake. John's wife, Mary, was the first to offer to run an interest group, Music Appreciation, which John later took on, and it was still going strong up until earlier this year. He also established the very successful Bridge Group. Other stalwarts from those early days include Robin Acland who continues to convene the first Literature group.



John Upson cuts the 30th celebratory cake

JUNE MONTHLY MEETING TALK - BROUGHAM HALL by Mary Chappelhow

Mary Chappelhow is a potter and has been based at Brougham for several years, making pottery and running workshops and individual lessons. She has researched the long history and prehistory of the site and its surrounding area, which includes the famous Arthur's Round Table, Roman remains of a fort and its adjacent crossing point of the river Lowther, and Brougham Castle. The previous owner of Brougham Hall, Chris Terry, was especially interested in revealing the past and organised earlier archaeological excavations of the site. He was also responsible for significant rebuilding of a block of Tudor buildings on the site, now used as artisan workshops.

Using intriguing photos and stories of previous owners of Brougham Hall, Mary brought its past to life. Particularly interesting were the stories of Lord Brougham. He was renowned for his governmental role as Lord Chancellor in the 1830s and as the inventor of the Brougham carriage which was horse-drawn but designed for speed. He is also remembered for his role in supporting the abolition of slavery and for the 1832 Reform Act, expanding the range of people entitled to vote in general elections. He had a significant role at Brougham Hall in extending it to include 39 bedrooms, and it became known as the 'Windsor of the North' due to visits by King Edward VII and the future George V. By the 1930s, thanks to debts incurred by a later spendthrift Lord Brougham, much of the building was demolished. However, a very different



Brougham hall

stage in the role of Brougham Hall came in the 1940s when soldiers were housed there. They were working on a special new secret weapon, which was being developed at the Hall.

Moving beyond history, Mary told us of recent events involving the journey towards Brougham Hall's new status as a Community Interest Company. This has been achieved by the efforts of a group of six stake-holders with workshops at Brougham Hall who jointly have responsibility for the protection, repair and maintenance of the buildings on the site. This has been a great achievement but also demands much continuing work including the raising of money for further improvements.

Sue Tomlinson

COMMITTEE AND ROLES JUNE 2026 - 2027

Chair James Murdock Also monitor of PNLu3a bank accounts.

Vice-Chair Jane Stables **Also, Groups' Co-ordinator**

Secretary Josie Dunlop. Also responsible for equipment storage, proof reading the PNLu3a newsletter, and is the Committee link with the Third Age Trust and with the Monthly Meeting Co-ordinator.

Treasurer Gordon Reid. Also, Committee link with the Charity Commission

Groups' Co-ordinator Jane Stables. Also, proof reader for Groups' section of the newsletter.

Membership Renewals Secretary Maggie Neale. Also, Website assistant. She is assisted by Yvette Bradley, who also has responsibility for Beacon training.

Monthly Meeting Co-ordinator Sue Tomlinson with Josie Dunlop as the Committee link now that Sue has retired from the Committee.

New Members Secretary Lesley Hall. Also, the **Beacon Data Base Secretary** responsible for making changes to membership details and keeping them up to date, as requested. She also uses this secure system to send out the newsletter link and other e-mails to members, as well as submitting up to date data about those receiving the Third Age Trust magazine.

Newsletter Editor Ron Lyon. Also has responsibility for document control.

Publicity Officer/ Events Co-ordinator Angela Power

Website manager Alan Beale. Also the Beacon system liaison officer

JULY VISIT

VISIT TO LEVENS HALL AND FARFIELD MILL

A beautiful day much enhanced the enjoyment of this year's July visit. The first call was Levens Hall, starting with an excellent private guided tour of the house whose roots date back to mediaeval times. The ancient 13th century Hall currently belongs to the Bagot family and has a wealth of interesting features including the Cordoba gilded leather-lined walls of the dining room, early examples of swivel chairs, and the earliest known example of patchwork in England. There are also various items relating to the Battle of Waterloo, including a bee clasp taken from Napoleon's cloak, and several objects once belonging to Wellington.

After the tour individuals were able to revisit the house or to enjoy delicious refreshments following which many explored the gardens renowned for their topiary, probably the oldest in the world and certainly among its finest. The colours and beauty of the gardens were much admired and the trees and hedges offered welcome shade in the midday sun.



Levens Hall



Displays at Farfield

Farfield Mill near Sedbergh was our next call. A former water-powered woollen mill dating back to 1836 when the industrial revolution was underway, Farfield is now the base for a great variety of exhibitions. Individual artists and craftspeople are able to hire space to display their creations. Again, refreshments were available and a number found their way to the outside seating area looking down on the river and enjoyed relaxing and conversation. Interesting displays depict the industrial processes and the machinery developed to speed up the production of the cloth at Farfield. Not too far from Dent, many of the famed knitters were employed at the new mill. A pleasant journey back to Penrith in the evening sunshine rounded off a most enjoyable visit.

Sue Tomlinson

PNLu3a GROUPS

ARCHAEOLOGY GROUP VISIT TO SHAP WELLS AREA - 8th June

Thirteen members met Patrick Neaves at the lay-by just south of the Shap Wells Hotel access road. After passing through the gate, we walked a short distance on a well-made track. This was the old way over Shap Fell before the turnpike road, now A6, was constructed.

A survey was undertaken in the area before a pipeline went through. Patrick showed us a map with much possible archaeology. Many of the features were lumps and bumps and needed a bit of the “eye of faith archaeological” to interpret. More recent tree planting in the area has avoided these features.

We left the track to walk towards a copse of trees. This was used to shelter young birds for shooting. The ground was very uneven, rough grass tussocks and quite a steep slope.

The group crossed a feature with ditches on either side. It was too narrow to be a Roman road, but might have been a boundary feature.

We then looked at a line of hut circles. There were at least 3 visible. The stone work of the base wall was obvious, but they were difficult to photograph. These were prehistoric, but there was no dating evidence.



Discussing lumps and bumps



Hut Circle

Further downhill was another linear feature. This contoured the slope for some distance and was probably a boundary. All looked towards Shap Wells Hotel and identified a field bank nearby. This has been noted as a Romano- British settlement.

Next we came across a wall feature. It consisted of a long wall of about 6 feet in height with two short walls at right angles. The wall was very well made and mortared. There was much discussion as it obviously had nothing to do with sheep. The wall was on a south-facing slope and was where the villagers of Shap put their bee hives in the past.

(Some people walked further to a “UFO” or a more recent cattle manger before the steep return to the old trackway).

About half of the group returned to the pumping house track before walking north to the hotel access road. Using a combination of

1:2500 map and OS app we walked west and picked up the Shap Fell track to the cars.

Linda Davis (with thanks to Christine Oxley)

ARCHAEOLOGY VISIT TO THE ESKDALE PREHISTORIC TRAIL



Looking down at the White Esk & Girdle Stanes stone circle on its banks from Bessie's Hill settlement.

Living in or near the Lake District, you would be excused if you thought I was going to write about Eskdale in the Western Lakes, but there are two rivers of that name in Cumbria, though the northern or Border River Esk only flows through Cumbria for the last part of its journey, before it enters the Solway Firth. “Esk” is a common river name and derives from the ancient British word *isca*, which means “water” or “river”; there also being a river Esk in N. Yorkshire (Whitby) and in Scotland in Lothian, with the separate rivers the North and the South Esk in Angus. The Exe, Usk & Axe rivers also derive from that same Celtic/Brythonic word root. Our archaeological journey took us to the upper reaches of the Esk beyond Langholm, and to the confluence of the Black & White Esk rivers, following the latter to Eskdalemuir.

Dot Metcalf had felt inspired to organise our trip after a previous member had given us leaflets on the trail a few years ago, and despite Eskdalemuir’s reputation for high rainfall (a record 7.5 feet of rain recorded at the observatory there in 2011), we had dry sunny weather for our August visit and for an earlier recce visit. We did the trail by car, but it is suitable for cyclists and walkers too, with each site being situated either immediately roadside as at the Romano-British “Boonies” above the river Esk to near roadside as at the Loupin’ Stanes and larger Girdle Stanes stone circles, and at Over-Rigg, sited in a natural amphitheatre, with the latter 3 all along the banks of the White Esk. The uphill walks to the hill-forts were all fairly short (less than a mile) and again easily accessed from the road. This excellent link <https://langholmwalks.co.uk/eskdale-prehistoric-trail-2/> gives more details of each site, as well as site references. Though they can all be visited in a day, we concentrated on the more accessible sites, plus the hillforts of Bailiehill, with its excellent views of the confluence of the White and Black Esk rivers, and Bessie’s Hill, with views of the White Esk below and at least one stone circle on the opposite bank. The hillforts all have impressive ramparts and ditches & Bessie’s Hill also has a later, less heavily defended settlement overlooking the fort.



The view from Bailiehill hillfort looking down to the confluence of the White & Black Esk.

From the air, and in size, Castle O'er, situated between the two hillforts we visited is the most impressive, but deserved more time and has a very steep climb up to it, though the return forest track makes an alternative route, and would be well worth a return visit. This link

<https://scotlandstartshere.com/tours/eskdale-prehistoric-trail/> states that The timescale of these nine sites goes as far back as the Neolithic period (4,500 years ago) when our hunter-gatherer ancestors began to settle down in the Esk valley, and forward from there to the first century AD when the Romans invaded the area. NB it is interesting to note that there were Roman Forts at both Eskdalemuir (Raeburnfoot) and Langholm (Broomholm) with a road along the Esk to the Roman Fort at Netherby, north of Longtown. The defensive

hillforts pre-date that time (Border reiving being nothing new?) and with no direct archaeological evidence of actual fighting, perhaps the cattle farming Selgovae tribe of these hillforts decided to have a more peaceful trading relationship with the Romans?

Josie Dunlop

PROPOSED NEW GROUP – “TRAVEL TALES”

Group aim: To meet and enjoy sharing our travel stories and experiences

Group details: Travel can mean many different things to different people, but can be a memorable, enjoyable and enriching experience. Your travel tales could be from anywhere in the world, from day trips in the North of England, right through to far flung adventures, and might be recent or from quite a while ago.

Whether you just want to find out about other people's experiences and potentially get some new ideas, or to share your own travel memories, then hopefully this group might be of interest to you. As a new proposed group, it will clearly adapt to what works best, but the idea would be to meet in person every month as a minimum.

Why not come along to our introductory meeting which is being held in the downstairs meeting room at Penrith library on Thursday 10th September at 2.00 p.m. to find out more?

For more information: Please contact Philip Hewetson - penrithu3atraveltales@gmail.com

BALLROOM DANCING

OUR BALLROOM AND LATIN DANCE CLASS NEEDS A NEW TEACHER!!

Do you have the experience to take this on, or do you know someone who might fit the bill?

This friendly group has been running weekly in term time at Stainton Village Hall, a lovely place with a sprung floor.

The September group would include beginners and some people who have learned basic steps.

It would be brilliant if someone can give their time to help so that this group can continue.

Please contact Jane Stables to discuss further: janestables@icloud.com

U3A BOOK GROUP 3 would welcome new members.

We usually use the Library Book Group service and have had some great reads this year.

Contact pamhead25@gmail.com for more details.

Pam Head

ARCHITECTURE 1 would welcome new members.

The Architecture 1 Group has been successfully running for some years. We have been very ably led by Gillian Stoddart during that time but Gillian has now decided it is time for her to retire. I have taken over as the new convenor and we would be pleased to welcome new members.

The Group meets on the first Friday of the month from 10-12 at the Methodist Church, Wordsworth Street, Penrith, cost of room hire is £3 each per session. We also make occasional visits.

The topics covered are chosen by the members and the usual format is for one or more people to present a topic at each meeting. We will cover the Stirling Prize before Christmas and other topics proposed for the next few months are Pugin, South African Buildings and British Brutalism. So our interests are wide-ranging and we are always keen to have new ideas.

If you would like to come and try us out please contact me, Andrea Willett at andrea.willett@btopenworld.com or on 01768 864400.

NON U3A EVENTS THAT MIGHT BE OF INTEREST

This new feature will highlight local events that might be of interest to members. It will only be included if space allows, priority being given to u3a matters. U3a takes no responsibility for the details or authenticity of the information, but items which appear suspicious to the Editor will not be included. Those members interested must contact the advertisers directly.

STAR GAZING FESTIVAL

The tenth North Pennines Stargazing Festival will run from Friday 23 October to Sunday 1 November 2026, with a range of fun and informative events throughout the autumn half-term holiday. The full programme is available at www.NorthPenninesStarFest.org

ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE A66 DUELLING CORRIDOR

Dig into the past! Discover the archaeology of the A66 at the free, hands-on exhibition.

With finds, activities, and more, you will get a rare opportunity to see our most exciting findings in our pop-up museum travelling up the Eden Valley this Autumn.

For further information visit <http://bit.ly/3R1pSz6>

For The Rooms, Penrith see: <https://theroomspenrith.org.uk/directions/>



UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM:

Information and Consent for Research Study - Study Title: PLUS-Optimal for Adults with Listening Difficulties: Investigating the Roles of Listening and Thinking Skills in Online Training Across Different Groups.

For further details or to take part, go to <https://tinurl.com/PLUS-Optimal1> or email Natalie.Lerigo-Smith@Nottingham.ac.uk

Copy deadline for the next issue – FRIDAY 13TH NOVEMBER

Please send all contributions ASAP PLEASE (don't wait till the deadline.)

Send copy to penrithu3anewsletter@btinternet.com. Send contribution text and pictures together in an MS Word attachment if possible, or as separate .jpeg etc., rather than in the body of the email - it makes transcribing much easier.....Thanks, Ron Lyon. (Editor)

GROUP CONTACTS

For the most up to date information on a group between issues of the newsletter, see the applicable website page at <https://penrith-n-lakes.u3asite.uk/groups/>. Several groups are operating at capacity, but convenors still need contact from you, even if you've heard that your choice is one of them. We try to establish further groups where there's a clear call for them.

We don't normally give email addresses below, unless the Convenor has requested it, as the address would be in the public domain on the U3A website. However, if you would prefer to make your first approach by email, please contact janestables@icloud.com, who will pass your email to the Convenor.

FOR GROUPS JUST GETTING ESTABLISHED

Tba.= To be advised

Architecture 1	1st Fridays 10.00-12.00	Andrea Willett 07866538216 or 01768 864400 andrea.willett@btopenworld.com .
Architecture 2	3rd Mondays 2.00-4.00	Sue Tomlinson 01768 865622
Art Discussion	1st Tuesdays 10.00-12.00	Angela Davies 016974 75217
Art Discussion 2	First Mondays	Jan Edwards jan.edw@btinternet.com 07950 923666
Birdwatching	4th Fridays	Jill Saunders - 01228 530267 Dave Neale - 0752 1295454
Book Circle 1	3rd Wednesdays 2.00-4.00	
Jackie Bramwell 01768 867208 Carol Mitchell 01768 890443		
Book Circle 2	1st Thursdays 2.00-4.00	Judith Markey 01768 863742
Book Circle 3	3rd Wednesdays 10.30-12.30	Pam Head 01768 201572
Book Circle 4	2nd Fridays 10.00 - 12.00	Angela Power 07811 084500
Bridge	Thursdays 9.30-12.30	Nick Evans 07967647028 Janet Evans 07717 833089
Bus Pass Adventurers		Jim Sellars Where, Days, Time - all * tba 07400920940
Camper Van	Ad Hoc	Brian Hodgson 07788 510194 dak195955@gmail.com
Cinema Club	Fortnightly on Mondays	Angela Stretton 07766 935854
Cycling	*Rides on Tuesdays March to October (*see u3a website)	David Luckhurst 07739 189421
Folk Dancing	2nd & 4th Thurs 2.00-4.15pm	Tirril Village Hall Rose Johnson 07894 260580 Roger Burgin 01768 894107
Folk Music	1st and 3rd Thurs 10.00-12.00	Cliburn village hall Martin Fagan 07771 665923 Neil Stretton 07986 214541
French Intermediate	2nd & 4 th Wednesdays 10am	Alastair Keelas 07929968648
Gardening	Ad-Hoc	Anne Jackson 07802 253413
Bits & Bobs		Christine Nicholson 07733 474083
German	Alternate Tuesdays 10.30-12.00	Kath Lawless 07788420156 kathlawless@googlemail.com
Geology	Last Tuesday 10am	Phil Newall Tirril Village Hall 07976 711545
Handicrafts 1	2nd & 4th Friday 10.30am	Carol Mitchell 07718 144509 wollaton@gmail.com
Handicrafts 2	Some Fridays 10.30am	Carol Mitchell 07718 144509 wollaton@gmail.com
Indoor Bowls	Thursday 2.00-4.00	Andrew Frazer 01768 428814
Italian	2nd & 4th Thursdays 2.00-4.00pm	Pam Head 01768 201572
Literature 1	1st Wednesdays 10.00 to noon	Robin Acland 01768 779672
Literature 2	1st Fridays 10.00-12.00	Katharine Cooke 01931 712429 kallycooke@gmail.com

HISTORY GROUPS

Archaeology	2nd Mondays 10.00 - 12.00	Linda Davis 07855 926465
Industrial History	4th Fridays 2.00	Ian Hoose 07961 322948
Local History	2 nd Wednesdays 10.00	Lydia Gray lydiachapel@gmail.com
Friends Meeting House		
Lunch Group	Last Fridays 12.30	Sandra Barton 01768 840410
Motorcycling	Fortnightly Fridays April to October (weather permitting)	Kevin Lodge 07914 679507
Nordic Walking	events to be advised	Roger Burgin 01768 894107
Philosophy	1st Thursdays 2.00-4.00	Alan Green 07812 059575
Photography	meeting times to be decided	Alan Beale 07414 656268
Play Reading	4th Tuesdays 2.00-4.30	Peter Bowles 01768 881222
Pottery 1	Tuesdays 10.00-1.00	David Neale 0752 129 5454
Pottery 2	Tuesdays 1.00-4.00	Anna Bartrum 07876 572836
Reckless	Monday mornings	Margaret Bancroft
Recorders	10.00 -12.00 fortnightly	b1952@btinternet.com The Quaker Meeting House 07855 662068
Science Discussion	2nd Thursdays 2.00-4.00	Roger Leech 07841378121
Sketching 1	Rosemary Koch-Osborne 1st Thurs 2.00-4.30	01768 881274 Diana Smith 01768 862196
Sketching 2	1st Tuesdays 2.00 to 4.30	Steve Atkinson 07989 565023 steve_atkinson@hotmail.com
Scrabble	1st Tuesdays 2.00-4.00	Mary Lund 01768 428312
Spanish	every Tuesday 10.30 -12 noon	
Maggie Neale 01768 868123 Joy Davies 07521 754003		
Table Tennis	Tuesdays - 2.00-4.00	Denise Walker 07984914095
	Thursdays -	Alan Beale 07414 656268
Travel Tales	Details TBA	Philip Hewetson penrithu3atraveltales@gmail.com
Wine tasting	2nd Fridays 3.00-5.00 October to April	Peter Edwards 07957866856 wineofcourse@pm.me
Writing for Pleasure	Last Wednesdays 2.00	Angela Power 07811084500

WALKING GROUPS

Short Walks	2nd and 4th Thursdays in the month 10am	David Miller 07810521479 djtmiller@icloud.com
Moderate Walks	2nd & 4th Weds	Brian Hodgson Dak195955@gmail.com
Fell Walking	GROUP NOW CLOSED	