



GROUP NEWS DECEMBER 2023

Art Appreciation/History

Disappointingly only 11 members turned up for our final meeting of the year. Still, enough to form 3 teams of three. Our convenor, Tristan, must have spent hours getting together a quiz which we admittedly found tricky, but enjoyable, and we shared many laughs.

This was followed by tasty treats and some non-alcoholic fizz which members had brought along.

Mary Findon has been our convenor for many years and recently retired from the post. She wants to have more time to devote to her arts and crafts and we presented her, with many thanks for her hard work over the years, with a gift token to spend on materials.

We meet on the first Thursday of the month at Fielden Hall and at our January meeting we shall be watching a DVD of how Matisse came to design the chapel at Vence.

Board Games Group

The Board Games Group met again on Monday 11th December in a mixed session with the Scrabble Group, so that those who wanted to could assemble in advance for seasonal gossip and a Wetherspoons lunch. The afternoon session took in Scrabble, Ticket to Ride and Qwirkle, and the usual amount of laughter (plus one Christmas hat).

Our sessions happen just once a month, on the afternoon of the 2nd Monday, downstairs at the White Hart, starting at 2pm and going on until about 4. To find out more, get in touch with either Brenda or Jim Botten at jroyd33@gmail.com or on 01422 844987 - or just turn up for a taster session, or to watch and wonder at the variety on offer..

Canasta Group

The final meeting this year saw eight of us have an enjoyable afternoon playing two tables of four. We meet on the 2nd Tuesday and 4th Monday of each month 2 – 4 pm at the White Hart (Wetherspoons) in Todmorden. Please note though that we won't be meeting on Christmas Day! The first meeting in 2024 will be on Tuesday 9th January. Further details from barbarawigley@btinternet.com

Art Club

Art Club welcomed lots of visitors to our exhibition, as part of Todmorden Open Studios, over the last weekend in November. We all enjoyed being part of this creative, community event. While planning the exhibition, we were busy on another group activity, kept under wraps until its “reveal” over the weekend. This was a collection of small paintings – inspired by and celebrating Jean Pearson (past Convenor). Our creations were expertly bound into a book by Art Club member Val Fynan ready for presentation to Jean’s daughter, Jane, and grandsons, James and Jack, when they attended the exhibition on the Friday.



Art Club has space to welcome new members to our fortnightly meetings on Wednesday afternoons, at Fielden Hall. If you would like to come along and meet us, contact

Judith, tel. 01706 812890 or Tristan, e. tristan.molloy.tm@gmail.com

Classic Literature Group

The group met in October to discuss the short stories of William Somerset Maugham. Group members appeared to have read a wide selection of short stories in preparation for the discussion. Members were asked to read a number of core stories as the basis of a shared perception in readiness for debate. This shared reading included, Rain, The Letter, The Colonels Lady amongst others.

The group generally agreed that Maugham was a consummate story teller and was a master of the form.

One member commented on his ability to draw the reader into time and place, “so that you felt you were there” particularly in respect of the stories set in colonial, Malaya, Singapore and China. This process of course reflected the racism, strict social hierarchy and brittle relationships which underpinned the organisation and maintenance of imperial hubris.

Despite his characters being presented as morally ambiguous it was agreed that the writer acted as an observer and avoided judgements of behaviour a repeating theme in his work is adultery. This possibly is an externalising of the unhappiness of his own marriage. His attitude to women was discussed, which must be illuminated by his position as a gay man. Historically, critical comment appears to fall into two camps. A view of perceived misogyny, at the downplaying and cliched reactions of female characters and a competing view of an ability to read and advocate for women’s individuality whilst subtly describing male hypocrisy and entitlement.

The group were in general agreement in respect of enjoying the stories, and some stating an intention to read more of Maugham’s work. It was observed that there is an ongoing fascination with Maugham’s work and an example was mentioned oh Tan Twan Eng’s, contemporary novel, The House of Doors, which pays homage to the short story, The Letter.'

The group met again on Monday 27th November and discussed Katherine Mansfield’s collection of short stories entitled ‘Bliss and other Short Stories’. This was a re-reading of them for several members, but not all. Reaction was mixed - some enthused, but others had reservations which led to a good discussion about the stories. All admired her writing and style and everyone was interested in Katherine Mansfield’s life. We talked about this at some length, since aspects of it were reflected in the stories we read. The many themes running through the stories were also noted, such as feelings of yearning, loneliness, the complexities in relationships and misunderstandings of love, as well as the beauty and power of the natural world. In addition, sexuality, the class structure of the times and the precarious financial position of both single and married women, were among other issues within ‘Bliss and Other Stories’ we talked about. We therefore had a stimulating discussion and enjoyable meeting - as usual! ...

Coffee Club

On 4th December, despite the snow and ice under foot, five of us were able to meet up at Honest Johns on Rochdale Road for our final meeting of the year without fracturing any bones or developing hypothermia. Later four of us stayed for a delicious lunch

Topics discussed included the national tour of Matthew Bourne’s ‘Edward Scissorhands’, the current state of Bury Market, both Beamish & Black Country Museums , the recent filming in Todmorden for a new TV series ‘The Jetty’, U3A Film Club and home surveillance systems.

Our next meeting will be on **Monday 8th January** in the private room on the right as you enter Honest John’s someone will be there from 10.30 - 12.15 pm so feel free to pop in for a few minutes or the full session and enjoy a coffee and a chat. Drinks are ordered from the room.

Meeting: First Monday of the month 10.30 am until noon, Honest John’s, Todmorden
Contact edithf789@aol.com

Concert Party (Senior Moments)

We had our first post-lockdown events last month: a sing-along as part of an Overgate fund-raiser at Booth Cricket Club, and our first outing to a Care Home at Waterside Lodge in Todmorden.

Senior Moments has become a very supportive group which has grown in confidence since it was first formed. We are now starting to receive requests from local Care Homes for performances.

So it has been a successful first year, and we look forward with interest to what 2024 may bring.

Season's greetings to one and all.

We meet on a Friday afternoon 2 – 4 pm at the Fire Station community room.

Craft Club

November 17th saw the members' continuing to prepare for Xmas by making lanterns as well as introducing new members to making the ever popular illuminated stars.

On December 1st we turned our attention to stencilling and painting on to cotton bags. Many members didn't manage to complete this project on the day as we are in the throes of preparing materials to use when we participate in Kidsfest. It will take place on December 16th in Todmorden Town Hall from 12-3pm.

Our meeting on December 15th is going to be a busy one as we shall be finishing our preparations for Kidsfest, having a Jacob's Join Xmas celebration, exchanging Secret Santa gifts and learning how to make Christmas baubles using glitter foam.

We shall be having a break after Kidsfest. The next meeting will be on January 13th. We shall probably spend the session having a general catch up and completing some projects.



Creative Writing

The Creative Writing Group met on the 7th of December in the Hawkstones Room at the TLC. Our seven members attending read out our pieces, the theme being 'Celebrations' before an afternoon tuck in to snacks and a seasonal glass of something to keep the cold out. We meet again on the 11th of January next year.

Contact Colin on colinsanson236@hotmail.com if you are interested in joining the Group

Enjoyment of Wine (Zoom)

The group have vacancies for new members. We meet every 2 weeks, mainly on zoom so that nobody needs to drive home. The group is all about enjoying some wine and wanting to know more about it. We meet face to face at The Fielden Centre about every other month though are considering making this more frequent.

The Christmas group social will be a 'bring your own' lunch at the group convenor's house on Wednesday 20th December.

Contact Bob Hayter bobhayter_2000@yahoo.co.uk or Michael Astrop mwastrop@gmail.com for more details.

European Film Club

The European Film Group will be meeting for the final session this term on Friday 15 December. Any enquiries about next term should be sent to angelagreenwood@free.fr

Meeting. 2nd & 4th Friday of the month, 13.30, film at 14.00, at Roomfield Church.

French: 'An Improvers Group'

As 2023 ends, French Improvers, currently averaging 10 attendees, have decided to change venues in January. We would like to try Todmorden College, the Hawkstone Room for our sessions on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of the month, from 1.30pm to 3.30pm.

The December sessions continue to be held at Fielden Hall with our Christmas Party (Jacob's Join) on 18th December.

Our current theme is 'improving our conversation skills' with practical tips for asking simple questions and responding accordingly.

Do come and join us, support is given every step of the way to make sure those evasive phrases will pop up when you need them!

Joyeux Noel et Bonne Année à tous

Contact radfordgill23@gmail.com

Gardening Group. (zoom meetings and outings)

The monthly zoom meetings continue. We have a good chat about all things gardening, and what we are all doing in our gardens.

The Zoom Gardening Group meets at 10.30am on the 1st Tuesday of each month from October to March. Group Convenors are Peter Gibson toddypg@gmail.com and Fiona Ryland fi.o.a.ryland@gmail.com

Membership of the group is open to all current members of U3A Todmorden.

German Group

Towards the end of November, I handed everyone a copy of a Heinrich Böll novel I'd sent off for. I'd thought it would be just right for Members. When I began to read it, I realised it would be rather tricky. This was confirmed by Members last week. Only one was keen to tackle the novel.

Fortunately, I'd scanned some shorter texts by Bertolt Brecht - poems and a short play - and we read those instead. We also had a quick look at a GDR collection of comic poetry and sayings, all much funnier in German than in translation. We'll be continuing with them tomorrow (12 December).

In our German discussion at the beginning of the session we'll all have a chance to speak about Marion Bednall, who sadly passed away over the weekend.

Golf for Fun

Winter is upon us, but we continue to meet informally for a short round (9 holes) most weeks, weather permitting. The regular time is Monday for a 10.30 am tee-off. Sometimes members play on Tuesday afternoons, 1.30 pm, taking advantage of opening times at the Club House.

Please contact the convenor John.Allison@3-C.Coop

Let's Go

Let's Go trip to York 6th December 2023

47 members enjoyed a trip to York on a sunny but very cold day last Wednesday. Whilst some members visited the tourist venues including the famous Betty's, others wandered around the Shambles and Christmas markets with numerous shopping bags appearing back on the coach.

This group will now have a break over the winter months whilst we arrange the 2024 programme and will resume after Easter.



Lunch Club

For the annual Lunch Club Christmas 'do' we made a return visit to the Dusty Miller in Mytholmroyd where 21 members enjoyed an excellent meal. We were pleased to welcome Tristan, our Groups coordinator, and his wife for their first visit to the Lunch Club. Crackers were pulled, hats were worn and a good time was had by all.



Mah Jong

What a month! Some impressive near misses and sure fire hits.

Near Misses

Pauline – calling for Mixed Pungs

June – calling for Mixed Pungs

Sure fire Hits

Sian – a basic score of 50 with 6 doubles

Fiona – Red Coral – in my view one of the loveliest, most aesthetically pleasing hands

Brenda – Mixed Pungs and Heavenly Twins, both on the same afternoon. Go, Brenda!

For those not familiar with the game, Mixed Pungs is a really difficult hand to achieve as it requires every tile to be picked up from the Wall, and you are not allowed Winds or Dragons, only number tiles. It's a BIG excitement when you get one, and it scores you 2000 instead of the usual 1000, AND you get a certificate on Chinese New Year.

We meet every Wednesday from 15.00 until 17.00 in The Golden Lion, whose hospitality is much appreciated. Please contact Emily Watnick if you are interested in joining us. emilywatnick@gmail.com

Members On Their Own (M.O.T.O.)

The MOTO group meetings are held on the third Monday of the month at Honest John's at 11am. New members are always welcome. To find out more, please ring Kay on 01422 844567.

Modern Greek Group

The Greek class is progressing really well. We have our Christmas meal on the 14th.



Meeting Alternate Thursdays in Hebden Bridge town hall at 11am Contact rontapsall@hotmail.co.uk

Novel Appreciation

We met Monday 4th December to discuss *Under the Net* by Iris Murdoch - her first novel, published 1954.

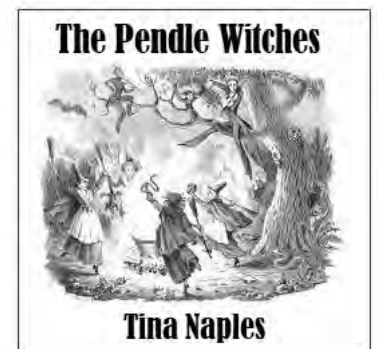
The (unreliable) narrator is an aimless young man, scraping a living mostly from translating, and living a fairly itinerant lifestyle between London and Paris. He travels around London encountering old friends and other eccentrics, drinking excessively and getting into scrapes. He demonstrates a capricious attitude towards his finances.

Some of us loved the book, especially for the humour, the quality of writing and the clever way philosophical ideas are introduced. Others were less engaged, though most got to the end. One member had some doubts about the narrator's behaviour towards women. Another wondered where Murdoch's writing stood in the canon of Irish writers.

Our next meeting is on Monday 8th January at 2 pm at Todmorden College to discuss *A Month in the Country* by A.L. Carr. New members welcome, please contact Brenda on broyd33@hotmail.com.

Online Zoom Talks

The group now has 80 members registered and 20 members connected for the second talk. The second talk was about 'The Origins of Christmas Traditions' by the convenor Michael Astrop.



The next talk is on the 4th January at 2 pm and it will be 'The Pendle Witches' delivered by Tina Naples. A programme is arranged up to the 4th April, and if you are not registered, but would like to receive the link for the talks just email Michael on mwastrop@gmail.com

Opera Appreciation

At the December meeting the group viewed and enjoyed Massenet's opera "Cendrillon" (Cinderella). The opera is based quite closely on the original fairy tale written by Charles Perrault and is essentially the same story as the traditional pantomime.

On January 12th the opera will be another version of the Cinderella story - Rossini's "La Cenerentola". This is the spectacular 2008 Barcelona production featuring Joyce DiDonato and Juan Diego Florez, both widely acclaimed for their roles of Cinderella and the Prince."

Members are welcome to attend any meeting to see if they are interested in joining the group."

Meeting. Second Tuesday of the month Roomfield Baptist Church 01706 344821 or email k.coates994@gmail.com."

Philosophy

The next philosophy meeting will take place at Roomfield church at 10.15 am on Monday 8th January. The topic is a discussion based on the theme of more lives than one.

Meeting Alternate Mondays at 10.15 am at Roomfield Baptist Church and or Online via Zoom Please contact baronps@hotmail.com

Photography Group One

Due to the inclement weather the proposed walk in Centre Vale Park to take Autumn photographs was replaced with an indoor practical session of Macro photography. Members brought various articles which gave a choice of subjects. Everyone took part even if some did not have specialised Macro lenses. A selection of the images taken plus images that some of our members had from previous monthly topics were show. One of the past topics was candle light images, one of which by George Robertson is shown.

Our next meeting is on the 13th December photographing Manchester Christmas Market. We are meeting in the coffee shop at Manchester Victoria Station at 11.00



We have a slight shift in our January programme, the meeting is on the 10th January in the upstairs room at Fielden Hall. Our group members will be notified about the change.

Meetings now held in the small room at Fielden Hall on the Second and Fourth Wednesdays, together with outings Details from billgriffiths0@gmail.com or by phone at 07966171126

Poetry Appreciation (zoom)

The topic of Sea Change produced four fascinating poems.

Gillian Clarke's Miracle on Saint David's Day is very moving and wonderfully written.

Zaffar Kunial's Stamping Grounds demanded close attention.

Tonic by Thomas Centolella likewise.

Emily Dickinson's This World is not Conclusion concluded an excellent morning's discussion.

Meeting. Second Friday of the month. Contact davidaconolly@gmail.com

Poetry Enjoyment (zoom)

The poetry enjoyment group met in November discussing poems on theme of celebration. Our next meeting is on December 18th at 2pm via Zoom with theme of Christmas or Free choice. Contact suenightingale@btinternet.com.

Practical Art

For our last session in November we studied the art of the Viennese painter Gustav Klimt. We then composed our own painting or drawing in the style of Klimt. His decorative style and use of pattern coupled with portrayals of ladies in high society Viennese fashion, proved a popular choice. In our final meeting of the year we will be putting the finishing touches to some of our earlier paintings before going up to the Top Brink pub for a Christmas meal.

Meeting. Alternative Fridays 10.30 am - 1 pm at Fielden Hall contact coateswendy1@gmail.com or Corinne Roberts stoneyroyd12@gmail.com

Psychology

When we met in December, we had an interesting discussion on psychoanalyst Melanie Klein (1882 - 1960).

With more than a dozen members, all of whom lead very busy lives, it's impossible to find a regular meeting time and day to suit everyone. In order to accommodate more members, we have revised our meeting times for the first 6 months of 2024 and from January 11th we will meet at 12 - 1.30 on the 2nd THURSDAY of each month.

Quiz Group

There will be no Quiz in December. Hope everyone has a lovely time. The next Quiz will be on January 25th. Best wishes for the New Year.

Meeting. Fourth Thursday at 10.00 am, Central Methodist Church convenor. myrna-cb@tiscali.co.uk

Readers Group (3 Valley Readers)

We met at Honest John's to discuss the Penelope Lively book Ammonites and Leaping Fish. This, to quote the author "is not quite a memoir. Rather it is the view from old age itself..."

We had mixed views but generally liked the writing style. The person who chose it felt it was not as expected and perhaps Moon Tiger would have been a better choice. Nevertheless, a discussion ensued on memory, age and changes over the years. Several of us will try some of her other books.

There is no group meeting in December.

Meeting. 1st Thursday of each month, 1pm onwards at Honest John's. Please contact Convenor Christine at daisyfieldhouse@yahoo.co.uk if you are interested in coming along.

Science Group (Zoom)

The Science Group holds a Zoom meeting each Wednesday opening at 10.00am. At each meeting we have two half hour video lectures, one from each of two series. There is a brief discussion after each lecture. An email including a link to access the meeting is sent to all Science Group members ahead of each meeting. The lectures start at 10:15, and the meeting normally closes at around 11:30. For further information contact Tom Williamson at tom.w16@outlook.com

The first course is “Origins of Life” The next five lectures are: - Life from the Bottom of the Sea, The Deep Hot Biosphere, Experiments at High Pressure, More Experiments Under Pressure, and Deep Space Dust.

The second course is “Chaos”. The next few lectures are entitled: - “The Properties of Fractals”, “A New Concept of Dimension”, “Fractals Around Us”, “Fractals Inside Us”, and “Fractals Art”.

Scrabble Group

The Scrabble Group continues to meet on the 1st and 3rd Mondays of each month, downstairs at the White Hart ~ but since the onset of the darker evenings we now meet at 1 pm and go on until about 3 o'clock. On average we get through three or four games per session, with the winners of each game moving round to another table, for the sake of variety and challenge.

We always have room for more players (of any level of experience). If you're tempted to join us please just turn up, or get in touch with either Brenda or Jim Botten at jroyd33@gmail.com or by telephone on 01422 844987.

Social History Group

The group does not meet in December. Our next meeting is on Friday January 19 at 10 15 am at the Methodist Church, please note the change of venue. The increase in numbers has meant a change of meeting place . We are continuing with the ' Class of 37' reading the chapter on Blackpool.

If you are interested in joining us please contact alanfowler1944@btinternet.com

Strollers Group

We are currently hibernating until March. Details of the March Stroll will be emailed to everyone in February.

Tablet Club

This month the Group had a long and useful conversation covering the different uses of the data related to modern phones. We also touched on aspects of security and using a phone abroad.

Meeting. First Tuesday of the month. 11 am. Honest Johns contact ianmacadie279@gmail.com

Table Tennis & Badminton



Table Tennis/Badminton meets every Monday during term time, at Todmorden Sports Centre, at 3:00 pm. Cost £3/session.

Meeting. Mondays at 3.00 pm Todmorden Sports centre please contact Ernie Rogen: arlineandernie@tiscali.co.uk IF YOU Would like to join this group.

Walking Cricket

The group has finished trialling the weekly meeting and the group will revert to second and fourth Thursdays. The only change that has transpired from the trial is different meeting times, so on the second Thursday it will be 2 pm to 4 pm and on the fourth Thursday it will be 11 am to 1 pm.

The last game of the year will be played on Thursday 14th December, starting at 11.15 am to 1.15 pm. The Christmas lunch will be held at the Dusty Miller Inn on the 21st December, where the annual improvement performance awards will be presented.

The first game of the new year will be on the 11th January at the Todmorden Leisure Centre from 2 pm until 4 pm.



A SELECTION OF BATTING & BOWLING FROM 2023



If you fancy a game or just want to try it out, either contact the convenor Michael Astrop on mwastrop@gmail.com or just turn up at the Todmorden Sports Centre, Ewood Lane on the second (2 pm to 4 pm) or fourth (11 am to 1 pm) Thursday in the month.

Walking Group

The Walking Group meets on the last Tuesday of each month. Details of each walk are sent out in advance by email to all Group Members and posted in the U3A Calendar on the web site. Our November walk was led by Trevor and Christine Williams on a beautiful sunny, but very cold day and the photo shows group members on the hillside near Whirlaw.

There's no Walking Treasure Hunt this year but there's a possibility we might do an unscheduled December walk in the week before Christmas, in which case details will be emailed to all group members at least a week in advance.

Enquiries about the group, or requests to join, should be addressed to one of the two Convenors Peter Gibson at toddypg@gmail.com or Bill Griffiths at billgriffiths0@gmail.com.

Membership of the group is open to all current members of U3A Todmorden.

