u3a Washington

SEPTEMBER 2026 NEWSLETTER



Holiday Group in Wales





Speakers

Today: Roger Morris – Joe Meek

October: Arthur Smith – Tanfield Railway

November: Margaret Bozic – A Bonny, Bonny Town? A History of Chester-le-Street

December: Christmas Lunch



Portmeirion

Last month eight of us had a holiday based in Criccieth, on the Llyn Peninsula, overlooking Cardigan Bay. We were very lucky to have warm, sunny weather. Our first excursion was to Portmeirion, an Italian style village, with spectacular views over the estuary. Then it was on to Porthmadog, where we watched a steam train heading off on the Ffestiniog Railway. The next day, two of our group took the coach to Llandudno, while the rest of us took a local bus to the next village of Llanystumdwy to visit the Lloyd George Museum and the cottage, which was his boyhood home, very interesting. Our final day out was to Llanberis for a journey on Snowdon's Mountain Railway, a rack and pinion system opened in 1896. It was touch and go if we would make it to the summit, as it was windy, but our driver got the go ahead. At the top of Eryri (Snowdon in Welsh) it was much cooler and windy, but we had spectacular views. The mountain was very busy with train passengers and climbers and at the top there was a queue to reach the summit! It was a very enjoyable little holiday.



Diana's Titanic moment



Ffestiniog Railway



View from Eryri/Snowdon

Future Events

18th September: 1.30 pm River Wear cruise at Durham

22nd September:10 am Visit to Recycling Centre at Wreckenton

20th October: Regional Event at The Laing, Pre-Raphaelite Exhibition & Talk (book on-line)

23rd October: Chatterbox Lunch (sign up on sheet at back of the hall, raffle prizes please for this to Susan Steanson)

8th December: Christmas Lunch at Wearside Farm (instead of monthly meeting, collect names next month)

Group News

Dominoes and Whist have restarted after a summer break

Holiday Group: no meeting in September, next one 29th October

Strollers

11th August: Ten of us visited Gibside, using National Trust vouchers to gain free entry. We completed a circular walk through the walled garden, to the Orangerie, then the Stables, headed back along the tree lined grassy avenue and visited the Chapel. It was a warm day and we negotiated some hilly terrain, so it was good to finish with refreshments at the outside café area. Diana





18th August: Fifteen of us set off on a leisurely stroll through woodland in Hebburn, formally part of Monkton Coke works. The weather was kind to us and everyone seemed to enjoy the stroll. Tony took some wonderful photos while we were strolling and of course we ended up at a water hole. Brian remembered to snap us back at the car park. Ken & Shirley









25th August: There was no organised stroll arranged for this date due to many members being away on holiday. However six of us met and decided to take the circular route to Elmtree to enjoy refreshments and the company. The weather was fine and we learnt of a proposed housing development for 434 houses to be built and found the old Leamside railway line that could be the new Metro line. So as well as being enjoyable, it was

1st September: This was our last croquet session of the summer. It was been great fun. Thanks to Anne Thomley for organising them.

Answers to Rich & Famous

1. Boothroyd 2. Habitat 3. Hairdresser 4. Margaret Thatcher 5. Westwood 6. Chelsea Clinton 7. Tony Blair 8. Johnny Cash 9. Prince Archie 10. Highgrove

Rich & Famous Names

1. Which Betty became the first House of Commons woman speaker?
2. Which trendy home store did Terence Conran found in the 60s?
3. Nicky Clarke is a famous what to the stars?
4. Which prime minister had twins called Mark and Carol?
5. Which Vivienne is famous for her outrageous clothes?
6. Which celebrity daughter was named after the song “Chelsea Morning”?
7. Which 90s prime minister was in a university group called Ugly Rumours?
8. Which man in black was a boy named Sue?
9. Which member of the royal family is 6th in order of succession?
10. Name King Charles’s Gloucestershire home.

Photography & Local History Groups

Members of the Local History Group had researched into the old ferry crossings and bridges over the River Wear and shared their findings last month. It was interesting, especially the lack of importance that was given to health and safety in the past! Along with the Photography Group, we will share our findings in a talk next year.

The Photography Group viewed further photos of the River Wear and also a selection of members’ recent photos. Keith had made an interesting visit to Ryhope Pumping Station.

We would welcome new members, you do not have to be an expert and we often use our phones to take photos.



CURRENT ACTIVITIES

Local History Woodridge Gardens	3rd Wednesday in month 10am Shirley Talbot	Film Club	Currently Pending David James Taylor
Day Outings	As and When Any member can organise these	Holiday Group Peacehaven Court	Last Thursday in month 10.30 am Val Pinder
Dominoes Woodridge Gardens	Alternate Mondays 2 pm Diana Clark	Whist Woodridge Gardens	Alternate Mondays 2 pm Diana Clark
Monthly Meeting St Andrew’s Church	2nd Tuesday in month 10 am	Lunch Club Various Venues	Usually last Friday in month – can vary Elvira Pirozzi
Photography Millennium Centre or Outside Photoshoot	1st Thursday in month 10 am Keith Allison	Quiz Millennium Centre	2nd Thursday in month 2 pm Shirley Talbot
Strollers Meet at St Andrew’s	Every Tuesday usually 12.30 pm (can vary) Diana Clark	Walkers Meet at St Andrew’s	Last Wednesday in month 10 am Brian Wilkinson
Indoor Walking Tennis Silksworth Tennis Centre	3rd Thursday in month 11 am (outside summer months) Sandra Cullen	Outdoor Walking Tennis Usworth Park	Every Thursday 1.30 pm (except 2nd in month, summer months only) Sandra Cullen
Croquet Cleadon Croquet Club	1st Tuesday in month 1 pm (summer only) Ann Thomley		

Contacts: Chair: Keith Allison Treasurer: Joan Plater Secretary: Elvira Pirozzi Tel: 07351975027
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If you wish to contact a group leader or other official, please visit out website where you can email contacts securely on the Contacts page.