

The Windmill

Eastbourne & Wealden u3a

Issue 99

Charity No. 1184226

January – March 2024

RAMBLING GROUP

Unfortunately our October ramble had to be cancelled because of the weather.

The November walk did not start well as it was pouring with rain when we met at the bus stop in Eastbourne and then the bus we wanted to take us to Bexhill was cancelled! Luckily the weather improved and Brenda led us on a very enjoyable walk from the De



The happy band at Hastings

La Warr Pavilion along the seafront to Hastings. When we arrived at Hastings some people had a picnic lunch before heading back and others went for fish and chips.

In December we walked from Wannock recreation ground into Polegate and up the Cuckoo Trail to Hailsham for

a drink and a bite to eat in a café before carrying on up to Upper Horsebridge, where we caught the bus back to Polegate. It was a beautiful, sunny morning and lovely to be out and about.

Our rambles take place on the second Friday of each month, generally starting at 10 o'clock. Lifts are usually available if required, though sometimes we use the bus. Volunteers have come forward to lead our rambles for the beginning of the year, and if you would like more details on any of the walks, or to join us, please see the poster at the monthly meetings or do not hesitate to contact the Group Leader, Theresa Hancock, on jandtmhancock@zen.co.uk or phone 01323-726685.

News from the Committee

By John Riley, Chair

I hope you had an enjoyable and peaceful Christmas, whether it was a busy time with family or quietly with one or two friends.

Our u3a had a successful 2023. Membership is about 200, including over 30 new members last year. This is a good number for the number and size of groups we have and we have about seventy members attending monthly meetings.

I hope you are enjoying being part of our u3a and that you have been able to get into one or two groups, some of which are open to all members.

This gives me the opportunity to express our gratitude to Group Leaders for all their hard work through the year. Thank you.

Our monthly meetings are a major part of what we do. Our speakers have been very knowledgeable and interesting. We again have a full programme of speakers for 2024 on a wide range of topics.

In December we enjoyed our Christmas Party. The musical themed bingo was fun, followed by a marvellous spread of sandwiches and cakes. Our thanks to the Social Committee for organising the event and to Brenda Kenward for putting together the prize hamper.

I know that many of you have already paid your subs for this year, for which many thanks. If you still need to renew, details of how to pay are on p. 8.

You need to know that our Membership Secretary and Group Leader Co-ordinator, Sharon Phillips, will be away until May on an extended holiday with her husband, John. In her absence membership matters should be referred to our Treasurer, Catriona Sheen, and group matters also either to Catriona or to any committee member.

With best wishes for the New Year.

MAH JONGG



This group has two vacancies. If interested, even if you have never played before and want to try it, please contact Cheryl Bone by text or phone on 07711 661870.

The group meets on the 1st and 3rd Monday each month at 10.00 am

Monthly Meetings

NEW SPEAKERS SECRETARY REQUIRED

Sadly, Richard has had to resign from the committee as a vice Chair and Speakers Secretary, for personal reasons. This means we urgently need a new Speakers Secretary to take over very soon who can start work on our programme for 2025. The job is not as difficult as many might think. Most speakers can be found on SpeakerNet and other websites or from a register kept by the u3a. Also, many speakers have several interesting talks and so can be invited back.

If interested, please speak to or text Richard on 07527 057859 or speak with any committee member. Meanwhile, thank you Richard for booking some really interesting talks.



January 2nd

A welcome return by *Michael Smith*, this time about Sir Ernest Shackleton entitled "The Man and The Myths". Shackleton, who lived in Eastbourne, became a legend on four epic voyages of discovery to the Antarctic a century ago, including the famous Endurance expedition.

February 6th

"Buying and Renovating a Ruin in Rural France". *Rukshana Master* tells a hilarious story of a young family who decided to take on a holiday project which almost took over their lives. Learning to deal with French bureaucracy, Aveyronnais food and the umpteen faux-pas with the language - and making wonderful French friends. Illustrated.



March 5th

"The Wildlife of Sussex". *Michael Blencowe* takes us on a guided tour from the rockpools through the woodlands and up onto the South Downs and we'll meet some amazing wildlife along the way.

April 2nd

AGM followed by "Geoffrey Chaucer and The Canterbury Tales", an illustrated talk by local historian *James Dickinson*, concentrates on the so-called marriage tales. Most famously that of the Wife of Bath but also the Merchant's Tale, The Nun's Priest's Tale and the Franklin's Tale.



Eastbourne and the South Downs

By Norman Brown, Committee Webmaster



Living in and around Eastbourne we are fortunate to be surrounded by the South Downs which offer extended views of beautiful rolling hills, seashore cliffs and of course the opportunity for many

interesting walks. Even if scenic walks are not practical, travelling across them by car or bus provides a green panoramic treat.

As is often the case, when one lives in a particular area it is easy to take our surroundings for granted, just accepting their scenic beauty without thinking any deeper about it.

Sometimes though we may wonder how this scenery came to be. For example, how and when did the Downs form? Why are they so rounded and smooth? Why do they consist mainly of Chalk but also areas of Sandstone and Clay?

Here, I attempt to briefly look at these Geological questions in a non-technical way.

Geological timescales can be a bit mind-boggling. We are thinking of 66 Million to 100 Million years ago when the Downland formation process began. This is known as the **Cretaceous** era. At that time this area would have been under a fairly shallow and warm sea in which multitudes of **Plankton** lived and eventually their skeletal remains sunk to the seabed forming a thick layer of **Chalk**.

On the seashore, energetic wave action washes soil and stones into the sea, where they are tumbled and partially broken up, the smaller particles and soils being swept

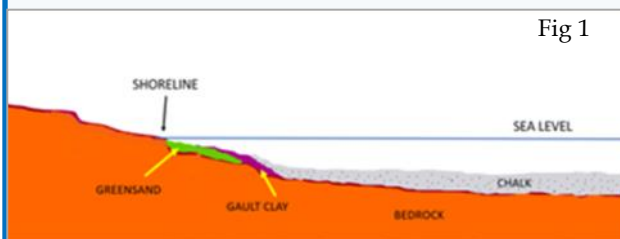


Fig 1

out to sea into quieter water where they sink to the seabed. Thus, we have the larger stones/pebbles along the water's edge (Beach) then smaller pieces further out (Sand) with the finest particles settling in deeper water.

Beyond this the Chalk is forming. Under heat and pressure these 3 layers form rock layers we know as **Greensand**, **Gault Clay** and **Chalk** (Fig 1).

Over time, the sea level rose causing the shoreline to move inland and the Chalk

layer to overlay Gault Clay and Greensand layers (Fig 2).

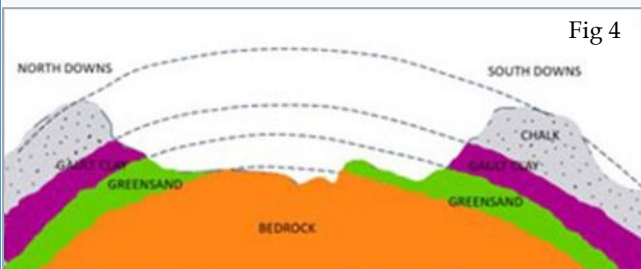
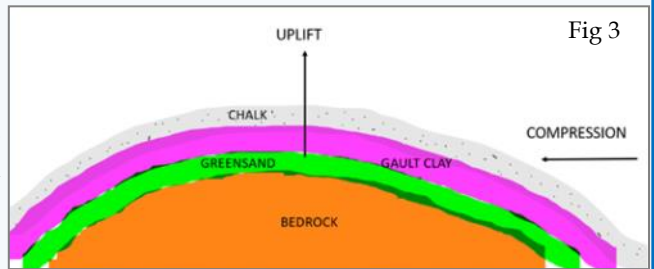
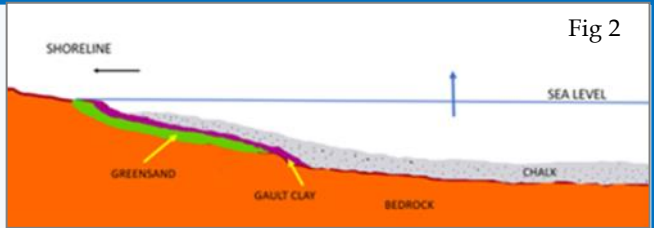
Following this, a period of Tectonic activity caused the land to be compressed, causing it to buckle upwards (Fig 3)

Gradually, this structure has been eroded by glaciers during the Last Ice Age together with subsequent weathering.

This produced the North and South Downs with the undulating High Weald in the centre. The soft chalk eroded into the smooth rounded hills we are familiar with today (Fig 4).

A period of receding sea level allowed wave action to wear away the base of the chalk to form the iconic white chalk cliffs we are familiar with.

As this continued, the rough irregular flints embedded in the chalk have been



washed out onto the beach where energetic wave action has gradually abraded the nodules producing the rounded flint pebbles characteristic of our local beaches.

Continuous collisions between the pebbles in



rough seas have generated a wide range of pebble sizes from large down to smaller stones and eventually to sand.

When viewing a beach one can see large flints at the high tide point, i.e. the high energy regions, gradually decreasing in size towards sand at the deeper lower energy depths.

This Erosion process continues in modern times and is responsible for the sometimes-dramatic cliff falls we observe as the cliff edges crumble (Fig 5)

THE LITERATURE GROUP

by Christine Neuss and Janet Harper



The Group members finished the year with a very sociable lunch, culminating with a vote for our favourite read of the year. The following are the books read during 2023.

The Red Queen by Philippa Gregory.

A blend of fact and fiction involving the life of Margaret Beaufort, the grandmother of Henry the Eighth. A sad unloved child, forcibly betrothed at 12 and giving birth to her only child at 13. Depicted as a deeply religious embittered lady convinced her only son, which she hardly ever saw, would eventually be king.

Historically Margaret Beaufort was invested as a lady of The Order of The Garter in 1499. She established two colleges in Cambridge, St

Christ's and St John's and St Margaret's Hall in Oxford which was the first college to admit women. She out lived her son and arranged her Grandson's coronation.

Glass Houses by Louise Penny.

A mysterious death occurs in a small Canadian village . The story unfolds on three time lines. It introduces an intriguing character, "The Cobrador" or debt collector. This is a silent black hooded figure that follows the guilty. A Spanish myth supposedly begun at the time of the plague.

Various twists and turns add to the mystery including drug barons and distributors with a dramatic show down at the end.

The Miracles of Life By J G Ballard.

An autobiographical account of his privileged early life in Shanghai followed by the deprivation as a prisoner of war under the Japanese, dramatised in the film "Empire of the Sun". On return to a cold and grey England life isn't easy. An easy enjoyable read.

10 minutes 38 seconds in this strange world by Elif Shafac. **VOTED BEST READ OF THE YEAR.**

This is the count down of the life of Tequilla Leila as the physical processes of her body wind down after she has been murdered. It is a very unusual but beautifully recorded account of her sad and strict Islamic upbringing, her sexual abuse followed by her escape and subsequently having to earn her keep in the only way she can as a prostitute. It also involves her loyal friendship with other society misfits. A humorous and tied up ending.

The Age of Innocence by Edith Wharton.

An elite closed social group living in a fashionable part of New York during the 1920's.

Rounds of balls and visits to the opera with plentiful drawing room gossip. An amusing critical intrusion into this voluntary pseudo aristocracy.

The Coroner's lunch by Colin Cotterill. VOTED SECOND BEST READ.

Set in communist Laos ex doctor anti-communist Siri is seventy and hoping to retire. However, he is forcefully reminded that it is his duty to be the only Coroner in the newly formed communist government. He fortunately has an endearing sense of humour to help him carry out his forensic and detective duties with very limited resources and equipment.

The Memory Police by Yoka Agawa.

Dystopian ,surreal and thought provoking with a very dramatic ending.

On an unnamed island objects disappear: hats, ribbons, birds, roses, boats until things become more serious. Most of the islanders are oblivious to these disappearances. A few retain a memory of these lost things but live in fear of the ever present draconian memory police who are committed to ensuring that what has disappeared remains forgotten.

Jane and Prudence by Barbara Pym.

Two highly academic ladies, one tutor Jane and the other her student Prudence meet at university.

Jane is the incompetent plainly dressed wife of a rural vicar and attractive fashionable Prudence has numerous failed love affairs.

Jane is determined to find her friend the perfect husband but she soon learns that matchmaking doesn't always prove easy.

The House with Chicken Legs by Sophie Anderson.

A children's book but can be enjoyed at all ages.

Based on a Russian folk tale character "Baba Yaga".

12 year old Marinka wants a friend but the house she lives in with her grandmother, who is a Yaga (one who guides the dead into after life) constantly runs to different destinations on its chicken legs and therefore is never in one place long enough for Marinka to find one. She does but they are not always true or suitable. Truly magical.

A Silent Death by Peter May.

A crime thriller set in Spain, Glaswegian Inspector Mckenzie flies to Spain to escort murderer Jack, an English expat, back to the UK. However, Jack escapes and events escalate. People trafficking, the rich expat lifestyles versus poorer locals and the deaf/blind life of Anna are all incorporated within the plot.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

The annual subscription became due on 1st Jan.

No form is required, but please tell us if any of your details have changed, i.e. name, address, phone numbers and email.

You can pay by BACS to the account of Eastbourne & Wealden u3a at HSBC Bank, Sort Code 40-20-06 Account No 61759272 quoting ref: SUB/[your surname and initial].

Or, send a cheque payable to **Eastbourne & Wealden u3a** to our Treasurer, Mrs Catriona Sheen, 9 The Combe, Eastbourne, BN20 9DB.

Membership cards can be collected at a monthly meeting. If you want your card posted please add 75p to your payment to cover postage.

NOT RENEWING. We would be sorry to lose you if you are not rejoining us this year. But please let us know. It saves us and you the nuisance of being chased for payment. Please notify Catriona by email at catrionasheen@btinternet.com or phone 01323 503085. We will then remove your contact details from our records.

LUNCHEON GROUP

By Anne Newson, Group Leader

The Lunch Group went to the ever popular Langham Hotel staff pantomime on Tuesday 22 December. We had 21 members on two tables. Everyone agreed this was a brilliant start to the Christmas festivities. We have been going to the Langham Panto for many years and our organiser has already booked us in for 2024.

The show was very funny and entertaining and totally enjoyed by everyone.

We didn't have a lunch meeting in November because of the panto day. We are also not meeting in January but some of the members are going together.

We meet again on 27th February at Friday Street Farm, but this is to be confirmed in the New Year.

On Tuesday 26th March we are going to the Holiday Inn for fish & chips.

**Members of the Tenpin and Dining Groups
enjoying the Christmas Lunch and Panto
at the Langham Hotel**



GLOBETROTTERS

Since the Autumn of 2018 the group has met and talked about their many foreign and national holidays, sharing photos, either on the screen or in albums. Between them they have visited most Continents of the World as well as many other countries and islands.

Meetings are on the 4th Monday most months at 2.00pm at the Group Leaders home in Willingdon.

New members would be very welcome. If interested please contact the Group Leader, Wendy Brownlow on 01323 486138 or email wendybrownlow@uwclub.net.

The next meetings are:

22nd January *Vivienne Lewis* will give an illustrated talk on Venezuela.

26th February *Wendy Brownlow* will talk on Northern Ireland.

As we all know cruises do not always go to plan. *Vivienne Lewis* writes that she and her partner were luckier than some.

“Paul and I have recently returned from a three week cruise on Saga's ship SPIRIT OF ADVENTURE to Madeira, Canary Islands, Cape Verde, Cadiz and finally CORUNA on the North East Corner of Spain.

We consider ourselves extremely fortunate as the sister ship SPIRIT OF DISCOVERY was the one that ran into all that trouble in the Bay of Biscay due to an Atlantic storm.

Plus on our return we found out that on the previous trip to ours on the same ship, instead of finding sunshine in the Canaries finished up in Cornwall for four nights and brief trips to one or two ports in Spain and Lisbon. This was due to bad weather, so we were lucky ours went to plan.

There were a number of activities we could do and I chose to add to my small vocabulary of Spanish. Our teacher, Susan who is half Spanish made it great fun and I made some nice friends in the class.

Paul chose to refresh his knowledge of bridge.

Cont'd top of p. 11

The food was excellent and we had some interesting lectures including one on how various terrorist plots had been averted and also how the perpetrators of the 2006 attack on the underground and bus were identified."



Sculpture of a giant octopus overlooking



Sunset over Lanzarote

SPANISH GROUP and MUSIC MAKERS

END OF YEAR REPORTS BY ANNE BARDEN

Spanish Group

Both Spanish Groups have been meeting on alternate weeks since September. Two members from the beginners group put their language skills to the test by spending November in Spain.

Before Christmas the first group learned and sung a new carol, "Campana clef Belen", ably accompanied by Ted.

Recommencement is on Mon 8th January.

New members are very welcome. Phone Anne on 01323 501334.

Music Makers

The Group met every month at Anne & Ted's house.

They have just acquired red T-shirts with a "treble clef" motif ... just in time for their performance at the Bernard Baron Residential Home in Polegate before Christmas. They played music from The Nutcracker, Water Music as well as Habanera and Jamaican Rumba. After a tea break with mince pies, the residents joined in with Christmas carols.

Unfortunately, the previous week's visit to Sycamore Grove Care Home was cancelled because of Covid. They hope to go there in the New Year.

The five members of the Group look forward to welcoming back their violinist, Amanda, in 2024.

Any new players would be most welcome. At present, we have flute, clarinet, cello, guitar and piano.

If interested, please give Anne and Ted a call on 01323 501334

GROUP CONTACTS, MEETING DAYS AND TIMES

Group Leader Co-ordinator: Sharon Phillips 07743 102151

Some groups are full. Please ask to be put on the Waiting List. Any problems, tell Sharon.

GROUP	GROUP LEADER	PHONE/EMAIL	MEETING DAY	TIME	VACANCIES
Canasta	Mike Garner	01323 728541	Every Fri	14.00	Enquire
Canasta for beginners	Mike Garner	01323 728541	1st Fri	14.00	Enquire
Day Trippers	Sylvia James	01323 500520	Varies	Varies	Open to All
Dining	Sharon Phillips	07743 102151	3rd Fri	18.30	Open to All
Spoken French	Susan Winge	07985 055296	Wed twice monthly	14.00	Enquire
Gardening	Charles Ackerman	01323 730655	4th Wed	14.00	Enquire
Globe Trotters	Wendy Brownlow	01323 486138	4th Mon	14.00	Vacancies
Literature	Christine Neuss & Janet Harper	01323 769004 01323 371317	2nd Wed	14.00	Enquire
Luncheon Club	Anne Newson	01323 472259	4th Tues	12.30	Open to All
MahJongg	Cheryl Bone	07711 661870	1st & 3rd Mon	10.00	Enquire
Music Makers	Ann & Ted Barden	01323 501334	2nd Thurs	10.00	Vacancies
Musicality	Bill Kipling	01323 411384	3rd Wed	14.00	Enquire
Photography	Norman Brown	01323 504952	3rd Mon	14.00	Enquire
Rambling	Theresa Hancock	01323 726685	2nd Fri	10.00	Open to All
Reading for Pleasure	John Moore	01323 507781	1st Mon	14.00	Vacancies
Scrabble	Denise Morgan-Smith	07852 664063	2nd Tues	10.00	Vacancies
Small Group Lunches	Barrie Pipe	01323 638946	4th Tues	12.15	Open to All
Spanish	Anne Barden	01323 501334	Alternate Mon	09.30	Enquire
Stretch & Balance	Sylvia James	01323 500520	Every Tues except 1st Tues	14.00	Vacancies
Strollers	Carolyn Brown	clbrown0427@btinternet.com.	2nd Mon	10.30	Open to All
Tea and Talk	Pat Brinson	01323 503585	3rd Tues	14.00	Vacancies
Ten-Pin Bowling	John Phillips	01323 768227	2nd & 4th Wed	10.00 for 10.15	Enquire
Theatre	New Group Leader(s) required		Varies. Open to all.	Varies	Open to All

Windmill Editor: John Riley Tel: 01323 724972 and email jwriley@btinternet.com.

Final submission date for the April – June issue is the 15th March.