



The Cliff Communiqué

December 2018, Issue 53

Chairman's Chat

I'm really looking forward to welcoming you to our Christmas Party this year on December 7th, with entertainment organised by the Committee and a festive spread provided by members. Thanks to you all.

December is a time to look back and this year has seen an increase in our membership and a move to Navenby for our monthly meetings. I would like to thank you for making this a success, and although it was a wrench to leave our old home, the extra space means we can carry on growing, welcoming both new and old friends.

Our monthly speakers continue to entertain us with varied and fascinating topics, not to mention a certain challenge to one's height. I am thinking of asking the Committee to order a pulpit for me to use when I preach to you again in the New Year.

On February 8th our next AGM will take place, so let us know if you are interested in being part of the new Committee or if you have items to raise. All the details are at the end of this newsletter.

May I wish you all the very best for the festive season and 2019.

Rita Bateman



This is a different start to our newsletter, in the form of a short story written by Rosemary King, who is the Convenor for the Idle Scribblers' Group. Its subject is very apt in this year of remembrance and commemoration of World War 1, and also at a time when the importance of mental health is at the fore.

Bittersweet

The station was rank with smoke, noisy with shouting porters and a sea of khaki clad men, jostling, pushing, hurrying to board the trains. Cecil looked so young. His handsome face, with the merest fluff of golden down along his jaw-line, shone with the joy of at last being old enough to fight for King and Country. Kitchener, with his pointing finger and piercing look, had sent a shiver of patriotism through our boys and despite the horror stories of life in the trenches, all of them longed to join up, in the fight against Kaiser Bill.

I watched as Cecil hefted his kitbag over his shoulder and stepped briskly up onto the train. He gave a little half wave, a half nod of farewell and disappeared from view. I was proud of my son, so recently just a schoolboy at Wellington and now a Lieutenant in the army. He would serve his country with a steadfast passion and be ever loyal to the flag: the great Union Jack. As I turned away I passed a motorised ambulance, collecting the injured, newly arrived from the front. Although it would not do to stare, I saw a sea of bandages, the white criss-cross patterns covering stumps of limbs and swathing heads. I averted my eyes out of sympathy and embarrassment. This was not the face of war civilians wished to see.

Letters from Cecil arrived in a steady flow. He was in camp; the food was basic; his men were fighting fit and raring to have a go; transport was on its way to ferry them to the front; there was mud, mud, mud and the never-ending barrage of noise; life was uncomfortable and rations were sparse. The letters became sporadic and concentrated on wet socks and the stench of bodies, long dead but with no way to dispose of them. A hint of despair crept in as the winter cold intensified. And then the letters ceased. We, his father and I, heard no word and hoped that the hurrying, pedalling telegraph boy would not come ringing on our doorbell.

So many of our friends had lost their boys! They seemed to have been slaughtered in their thousands, while others spoke to us of the misery of coping with those injured, sightless, damaged men who once had been the pride of Britain's forces. We waited, ever tense in a limbo of no news, wanting and yet not wanting to hear some word of Cecil.

Springtime turned the leafless cherry trees to clouds of pink and catkins danced on every zephyr breeze. Cecil walked slowly up the garden path. Tall and golden haired but a little stooped and treading in a careful way as though wading through thick, sticky treacle. He greeted us as strangers and seemed so distant that we dared not touch him, nor speak of what was in our hearts, or cry, or laugh, but we were just glad that he was safe and in one piece. He sat with us, ate with us and wandered round the house, there in body but yet not there. That night our shared nightmares began. He screamed and howled; he shook and slavered; he clawed at monsters only seen in his imagination and he fought off demons, who lived inside his tattered mind. As dawn came he slept, a heavy sweating sleep of sheer exhaustion. At last we slept too, tormented by the horror of the shell that remained of our broken son.

By midday he was back with us, quiet, polite and apart. He was immaculately shaved and dressed, always in his uniform with gleaming buttons and boots. Those boots gave him a purpose. He no longer had a batman to keep his uniform and footwear up to scratch and so he spent hours polishing, spitting, buffing and finally caressing them with a silken cloth. As he worked he would croon to himself, a low monotonous growl, which drowned out all other sounds and kept the cacophony of remembered battles at bay. We were in despair as there seemed to be no help from his regiment or the doctors and we dreaded the possibility of his being recalled to the battlefield. Although his body was intact we knew that his mind was a shattered vessel, incapable of returning to the stress of war.

However, in late summer the order came for Cecil to rejoin his regiment. His nightmares intensified and the dark nights echoed with maniacal screaming. But orders must be obeyed and Cecil squared his shoulders and without a smile or backward glance, boarded the train for the second time. His stoic patriotism was undiminished and I was proud of his unshakeable bravery but my heart wept for fear of losing him, this time in both mind and body. Then, suddenly it was over. The Armistice was signed and the remnants of a once glorious army straggled home. Of Cecil there was no word. Nothing! Was he dead? Perhaps he was in hospital? Had he been invalided out into an asylum? We bombarded his regiment, the War Office and the friends who had survived, for any idea of where he might have gone. We could not mourn for we had no death and so for years we lived in a No Man's Land of heartbreak. For over twenty years we waited, growing grey with age and intolerant of the newfangled way of life, which engulfed us at every turn.

Then one day a young man, tall and golden strode jauntily up our path. I could just see the fuzz of blonde upon his jaw and my heart stood still.

"You must be Grande-mère!" he said and holding me at arm's length he leant forward and kissed me on both cheeks. I am the son of Cecil. My Papa wished for me to see you." And so he told us of the kindness of his mother, Amélie, who had at first befriended the lost and wandering soul and had then married him. Over the years the nightmares diminished but Cecil felt impelled to tire out his body with the heaviest of farm work and had remained determined that he would never inflict his mental breakdown upon us, his proud and loving parents.

My heart broke a second time when Jean-Pierre told us that two months previously, Cecil had passed away. I looked upon this tall and confident stranger and felt a bitter-sweetness creep over me. Life had now to go on without the hope of Cecil's return but instead, here was a part of our beloved son, miraculously returned to us.....until the next round of war, which was already looming large, as a militant Germany was arming itself for renewed battle.

The destructiveness of war was not confined to lost sight and limbs, but more deadly was the unseen sickness...that of the mind. I prayed that if we went into battle again, this would be recognised and treated.

The Poppy Wave at Lincoln Castle



Farewell and Welcome

During the course of the year we have said hello to a large number of new members and regrettably said goodbye to several of our long-standing members.

It was a very sad farewell to Marjorie Birch, Ruth Broughton, Ken Burton, Mick Rampton and Eve Rodgers. However, a warm welcome is extended to Gillian Ayling, Janet Barron, Hazel Burnett, Jenny Drury, Sheila and Peter Gill, Peter Kenyon, Vivienne and Allen Lacey, Glynis Morris, Laine Murless, Adam and Rhiannon Paxton, Debs Pollard, Maureen Sutton and Pauline Sweeney .

Membership Renewal 2019

Membership renewal forms will be available at the monthly meeting on January 11th, so please come along then with your cheque book and be ready to confirm or update your details.

The subscription is £12 and cheques should be made payable to Cliff Villages (Lincoln) U3A. If we haven't received your subscription by January 31st, it will be assumed that you do not wish to renew your membership.

Group News, compiled by the Convenor unless stated otherwise.

Armchair Travel

Convenor: Peggy Marshall 01522 720641 peggymarshall264@gmail.com

We will be visiting the following locations in 2019.

January 9 th	Last Lost Kingdom	Mike Cross
February 13 th	Helsinki and Finland: Brown Bears	Steve Lovell
March 13 th	Walking the SW Coastal Path	Linda and Keith
April 10 th	Iran	John Robinson
May 8 th	India	Stan Leithead
June 12 th	OUTING	
July 10 th	Madeira	Pat Rampton with Linda and Keith
August 14 th	NO MEETING	
September 11 th	Salzburg and Vienna	David Hufton
October 9 th	Hong Kong to St Petersburg by train	Julie Stevens
November 13 th	The Hebrides	Pat and Gerry Thomas
December 11 th	Christmas	

Any new members are welcome to join us. We meet at Harmston Memorial Hall on the 2nd Wednesday of the month, 10.00am start. Tea and coffee are served from 9.30am. There is a charge of £1.50 to cover expenses.

Bird Watching

Convenor: Ross Thomson 01522 720590 chris.noboy@virgin.net

A lovely Autumn day, cool but sunny. The Idle Valley site has a variety of habitats so there was the expectation of a good day out. We set off at the southern part, but were disappointed by the lack of many sightings. There were a number of ducks on the far side of the first lake, but identification was difficult. We met a ranger who blithely told us that the northern part was by far the best place for viewing. Buzzards had been seen there that morning. After lunch we moved to the northern part, somehow managing to split into two groups. Norman and I parked and waited for the others, but they missed seeing our car and went on to the next area. This proved to be more productive and we spent quite some time there. It is claimed that Bitterns come to one of the lakes every winter.

Our sightings

Egyptian Goose	Shoveler	Mallard
Coot	Black-backed Gull	Tufted Duck
Gadwall	Swan	Cormorant
Pochard	Canada Goose	Wigeon
Little Egret	Great Egret (?)	Goldeneye (?)
Heron	Lapwing	
Blackbird	Magpie	Robin
Chaffinch	Crow	Warbler (/)
Ring Plover	Long-tailed Tit	Blue Tit

The site was so attractive and the weather so very pleasant that overall it was well worth the visit.

John Healey

Games Group

Convenors: Kenny and Yvonne Moir 01522 720770 goldmoir@aol.com

The Games Group started well again this year with 28 members coming to our October meeting. We usually start with a short quiz or other activity which includes everyone and a small prize is awarded to the winner. We are then free to take part in any activity we fancy, Mexican Dominoes being the most popular. This is a lovely way to spend a cold afternoon in the winter, among friends, so why not come and join us? We meet every third Wednesday at Harmston Memorial Hall starting at 2.00pm.

Industrial Heritage Group

Convenors: Pat Thomas 01522 887546 pat.thomas1@ntlworld.com

David Raines 01522 810843 davidraines290@btinternet.com

Proposed Joint Study with Lincoln University and the Lawn.

Following the very successful summer visits to the Sarah Swift Building (University of Lincoln Health and Social Care Department) and Stokes Enterprises at the Lawn, the group has been invited to participate in a proposed joint study of the Lincoln Lunatic Asylum that opened in the Lawn in 1820. Our input would involve the study of medical records that have been deposited in the County Archives.

Currently we are awaiting the outcome of an application for financial support.

The published programme for the autumn was disrupted twice by cancellations to the Destec factory visit. My apologies to members who were not aware of the changes. I attempted to email or phone all group members with the data available. It is important that contact information is kept up to date.

Without our willing helpers the group would not run so smoothly! Thank you to all. While I was on holiday the visit to Destec was cancelled for a second month running and at very short notice. Kenny and Yvonne, responding to fraught texts and emails, stepped into the breach, immediately booking the hall and then announcing the changes.

In the September film we learned how to build a Nuclear Submarine.

In October The National Coal Board Film Unit archive gave an insight into mining and the miners at work and in their leisure times.

November was an illustrated talk by Chris Lester of The Grimsby Ice Factory Trust about the history, technology, and current state of the largest ice factory in the world. Chris and his fellow trustees are striving to raise the finances to restore this icon that is on the European List of the ten most endangered industrial buildings.

Programme

December NO MEETING

Redwood Drive Community Centre, Brant Road, Waddington 3rd Friday of the month: coffee 9.50am until 10.15am. Presentation 10.30am until noon

2019

Jan	18	Film	The British Antarctic Survey
Feb	15		'Steaming Ahead 2019' with member Mike Willerton
Mar	15	Film	The Clyde Puffers (small coal fired cargo ships)

Short Walks Group

Convenors: Kenny and Yvonne Moir 01522 720770 goldmoir@aol.com

This has been another successful year for the group with some lovely walks. We have 30 members registered, with an average of 20 per walk.

Yvonne and I have been running the group for 11 years and although we have a few new walks, if anyone knows of walks of approximately 3 miles with somewhere suitable to eat, please let us know.

Our final walk in October was at Washingborough, followed by scones and cream at Washingborough, where the staff looked after us exceedingly well.

We look forward to seeing you all on Wednesday March 20th 2019.



Refreshments Rota

11th January 2019

8th February 2019

8th March 2019

Kenny and Yvonne Moir, Gill Lee, Barbara Varlow.

Kay Parker, Pat and Gerry Thomas, Audrey Morrison.

Diane Cook, Pam Bilboa, Christine Hawley, Hazel Burnett.

Please let Valerie Perry know if you are unable to fulfil this commitment: 01522 826108, or

e.valerieperry@gmail.com

Newsletter submissions Thanks to all who contributed and to Clive Morrison for proof-reading. The next edition goes out at the beginning of April, so any items should be sent to m.l.ross.uk@gmail.com by the penultimate week in March.

CLIFF VILLAGES U3A, GROUPS & CONVENORS, As At August 2018

GROUP	Convenor	TEL. NO.	E-mail Address	Date	Time	Venue
Armchair Travel	Peggy Marshall	01522 720641	peggymarshall264@gmail.com	2 nd Wed	10.00am	Harmston MH
Art	David Raines, Arthur Hazeldine	014522 810843 01522 720387	davidraines290@btinternet.com arthurhazeldine@gmail.com	Every Mon	10.00am	Redwood Comm Centre
Bird Watching	Ross Thomson	01522 720590	chris.noboy@virgin.net	3 rd Wed	6.30pm	Various
Book Review	Judith Horsfall	01522 789485	judithannhorsfall@btinternet.com	2 nd Tues	Various	Various
Bridge	David Shaddick	01522 802128	david.shaddick@live.co.uk	Every Wed	2.00pm	Various
Church Architecture	Bob Alder	01522 810093	robertjamesderekalder@hotmail.com	Various	Various	Various
Circle Dancing	Terry Gilmore	01522 729074	terryg935@gmail.com	1 st Tues	1.45pm	Redwood Comm Centre
Computer Security	Rob Hadfield	07858 606202	robert.l.hadfield@talk21.com	TBA	TBA	Redwood Comm Centre
Flower Arranging	Rosemary King	01522 721187	rosemary82king@gmail.com	3 rd Tues	2.00pm	6 Walled Gdn, Harmston
Food, Glorious Food	Pat Rampton	01522 874746	prampton1803@gmail.com	1 st Fri	10.00am	Various
Heath U3A French	Adrian Pell	01522 821729		Every Tues	10.00am	Waddington
Games/Social Afternoon	Yvonne & Kenny Moir	01522 720770	goldmoir@aol.com	3 rd Wed Oct - March	2.00pm	Harmston MH
Gardening	Rosemary King	01522 721187	rosemary82king@gmail.com	1 st Tues	10.00am	Various
Historical & Personal Research	Bob Goodman	01522 811325	goodman628@btinternet.com	4 th Fri	10.00am	Harmston MH
Idle Scribblers	Rosemary King	01522 721187	rosemary82king@gmail.com	TBA	TBA	TBA
Industrial Heritage	Pat Thomas David Raines	01522 887546 01522 810843	pat.thomas1@ntlworld.com davidraines290@btinternet.com	3 rd Fri	9.45am - noon	Large Hall Redwood Comm Centre
Kurling	Howard Martin	01522 827576	howardmartin@ntlworld.com	Alt Tues	10.00am	Wellingore MH
Long Walks Contact:	Pat Rampton	01522 874746	prampton1803@gmail.com	1 st Thurs	10.00	Various
Mahjong	Rosemary King	01522 721187	rosemary82king@gmail.com	Every Thurs	2.00pm	Various
Music Appreciation	Glenys Gage	01522 880179	glenysgage@hotmail.com	2 nd Thurs	2.00pm	Waddington
Needlecraft	Pat Thomas	01522 887546	pat.thomas1@ntlworld.com	4 th Fri	2.00pm	Waddington
Parchment	Jill Alder	01522 810093	alder.jandb7@btinternet.com	1 st Wed	10.00am	Metheringham
Pub Lunches	Barbara York	01522 720633	barioak@tiscali.co.uk	4 th Thurs	Various	Various
Lincoln U3A Quiz Group	Keith Stocks	01522 682489		1 st Mon	10.00am	Bracebridge Comm Centre, Maple St
Scrabble	Rosemary King	01522 721187	rosemary82king@gmail.com	1 st ,4 th Wed am	10.00am	Various
Short (Village) Walks	Yvonne & Kenny Moir	01522 720770	goldmoir@aol.com	3 rd Wed	10.00am	Various
Spanish	David Shaddick	01522 802128	david.shaddick@live.co.uk	1 st ,2 nd ,3 rd ,4 th Tues,	10.30am	Waddington
Sugarcraft for Beginners	Pat Rampton	01522 874746	prampton1803@gmail.com	1 st Wed	10.00am	Waddington
Sugarcraft - Intermediate	Pat Rampton	01522 874746	prampton1803@gmail.com	1 st Wed	2.00pm	Waddington
Ten Pin Bowling	David Raines	01522 810843	davidraines290@btinternet.com	Alt Tues	1.30pm	Washingborough