



# CRAVEN U3A NEWSLETTER

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## ***Dates for your Diary:***

*11 May - Coffee morning  
with speaker at Champions,  
10 for 10.30 am*

*15 May – Craven u3a AGM  
at St Andrew's Church Hall,  
Skipton, 2 pm for 2.30 pm*

*8 June – Coffee morning  
with speaker at Champions,  
10 for 10.30 am*

*25 & 26 July – Summer  
Programme at Ermysted's  
Grammar School*

## **Please come to the AGM on 15 May**

It's that time of year when our attention is focused on the AGM. All members should have received the documents for the meeting which is being held at St Andrew's Church Hall on 15 May, with refreshments at 2pm before the official business at 2.30pm. There will then be a demonstration of the refreshed website, followed by preview of the 24/25 programme, and an opportunity to raise any other issues.

Your committee needs you; can I make a plea for anyone who may have thought of being involved to contact any member of the committee.

Please see page [7](#) for details of our upcoming Summer Programme, with a choice even wider than last year. It is now possible to pay by bank transfer.

We have identified a problem when claiming Gift Aid. Although members may have agreed to allow us to claim Gift Aid on their behalf, in the case of joint memberships, we can only claim on behalf of the person paying. So for the new membership year, there will only be individual memberships. Had this been the case in the current year, we would have got an extra £600-odd in Gift Aid. As they say, every little helps.

*Mick Richings, Chair*

## Science & Technology Discussion Group

Doug Hirst (below), who started the group in the mid 2000's, describes its early days: "I think the group started about 2007, born from a suggestion at an optics class the year before. I said I would have a go if no-one else came forward.



The original group was very small - me, Bron Masters, Carmel Piper, John Dixon, John Oldfield, Ian Evans, Marion Hemingway, Robin Bundy, David Pritchard. I apologise if I have forgotten anyone.

As a small group we met at each other's house in turn, and this continued for the first two years until the group grew enough to merit a venue. After

that we met in the Vestry Room at Holy Trinity church.

We did quite a few visits in the early years, including to hospital and other laboratories, and to Swinden quarry. We also did one or two brewery visits at Christmas. The final format evolved over a few years after trying different systems."

The session at one member's house in 2009 (right) shows the group attempting - and failing - to use dousing rods to try to find his borehole. Another member, being sightless, proved that the dousing movement is due to unconscious bias.



Doug continued as group leader until 2022, including running Zoom sessions online during Covid lockdowns.

We meet in-person and on Zoom today, using the excellent facilities at St Stephen's Church Hall including their large-screen monitor.



We discuss a broad range of current topics in science and technology chosen by group members, including the implications, scientific, social and political, of new research.

To learn more contact Ian at [devilsbit18@gmail.com](mailto:devilsbit18@gmail.com) or visit the Open Day this year.

*Ian Blomfield*

## *Skipton Local History Month*

Skipton Library is hosting the following events as part of Skipton Local History Month in May:

Wednesday 15 May – Meet the Archivist with West Yorkshire Archive Service  
10.00am -4.00pm

Thursday 16 May - Every Building Tells a Story – Talk by Sue Wrathmell  
10.45 – 11.30am

Thursday 23 May – Pubs are History - Talk about the Skipton Pub Trail by Steve Wilton 10.45-11.30am

The talks will be held in the Reference Library and refreshments will be available.

## Literary Lives

We have just completed the first year of our 'Literary Lives' u3a course and thanks to all the guest speakers who gave their time, knowledge and expertise it has been a great success, and we will be running the course again from October 2024.

Our concern when we launched the idea back in January 2023 was that we wouldn't get enough guest speakers to fill a meaningful programme. Our initial request for speakers met with a slow start but the programme was



Cecil Northridge giving his presentation on Samuel Beckett

eventually filled by June 2023, and we knew the course could go ahead.

This year, in contrast, we already had a full programme of speakers for 2024/5 before our current season of talks was completed.

In our first year, subjects included four writers from the 20th century, five from the 19th, and three from the 18th century.

And of the twelve talks, five were on English writers, two Scottish, and one each from Ireland, the USA, France, Italy, and Sweden.

From October 2024 you can look forward to talks on Seamus Heaney, Boris Pasternak, Stevie Smith & Barbara Pym from the 20th century, plus W B Yeats and Marcel Proust who straddle the 19th & 20th centuries.

From the 19th century we have Mary Shelley, Wilkie Collins, Elizabeth Gaskell, Robert Louis Stevenson, and Leo Tolstoy. And reaching back through the centuries we have all-round fascinating character and Shakespeare contemporary, Christopher (Kit) Marlowe.

*David Turner & Judith Barras*



## Sunday Lunch Club

As a lady(!) living on my own and an often lazy cook, this new group and the thought of a monthly roast dinner, seemed just right for me!! Several other people thought the same and our informal group has developed into a lovely friendly get-together.



We take turns at organising the lunches, after discussing venues between us and our numbers vary between 11-19 lunchers.

So far we have enjoyed The Railway pub, Herriots, Le Bistro des Amis and The Bay Horse in Skipton as well as Steeton Hall and 22 The Square in Crosshills.

I look forward to what future months hold for my monthly treat!!

*Barbara Moore*

*The **Motorcycling Group** was missed from the list of groups continuing over the Summer. In fact its season is March – October. If you would like to join, contact Harry Taylor on [harrytaylor1950@hotmail.com](mailto:harrytaylor1950@hotmail.com)*

## **"HERE'S TO THE NEXT TIME.....!"**

Those were the closing words each week, spoken by Henry Hall, at the end of his "Guest Night" radio programme. They really sum up our feelings at the close of yet another memorable "POPULAR MUSIC" programme (every Tuesday at 2 pm).

Our weekly meetings have provided a variety of fifty years of popular music, stretching from 1920 till 1970. One week, we listened to "Musical Contrasts" where different artistes sang the same songs, such as Grace Moore and Harry James performing "Ciri Biri Bin". Another week we recalled a dozen "Duets", from Crosby and Jolson to Garland and Kelly, via Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy. Nostalgia plays a major part in our weekly programme!

We have had a "British Week", remembering everything over the years from our home countries, from George Formby to Eleanor Rigby; whilst on an equally nostalgic afternoon in February, we listened to the sort of music our parents heard during the "War Years", from Bing Crosby to the sounds of Glenn Miller.

Leading up to the announcement of the Hollywood Oscars, we had an afternoon remembering previous musical winners, from the "Continental" (1934) and "Buttons and Bows"(1948) to "Three Coins in the Fountain"(1954) and "Moon River"(1961). We cater for all tastes!

And the whole term finished with everyone voting for their favourite artistes in our annual "Top Twenty". Ella Fitzgerald once again (for the fourth consecutive year!) topped the poll, with Nat King Cole coming second. Matt Monro waved the British flag by finishing third (the first time ever by a British singer!)

Our numbers are better than ever and the music varies from "The Great Caruso" to Lonnie Donegan! But the coffee and chocolate biscuits remain the same; as does the fun, the memories and the nostalgia. "Here's to the next time!"

*David Wiseman*

## The Summer Programme

I've been involved with organising the Summer Programme for the past two years and on both occasions I've been on tenterhooks. Will we be able to recruit enough presenters and facilitators to produce a varied and attractive programme? Will enough members sign up to make this a viable event?

I am so pleased that the answer to the first question for both last year, and this, is definitely a yes! Many thanks to all those who have agreed to lead a session because the Summer Programme could not run without you.

I am also so pleased that, in just over a week after publicising the programme, I have received more than 70 applications through my letterbox. I look forward to receiving more! (The postie must think I have a huge fan base). Enrolment forms will be processed from 1 May in the order they have arrived. My advice is to include 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> choices on your form in case some sessions are fully booked.

From 1 June, we will accept applications from non-members, so if you know of anyone who is interested in attending, please do point them towards the website where they can download the programme and an application form. The cost is slightly more for non-members but this will be refunded if they join the u3a at the Summer Programme.

Please note: for those of you who would like assistance with renewing your u3a membership online, there will be a help desk available in one of the classrooms.

I hope there will be plenty in the programme to interest you. Such a choice! History, Science, Literature, Music, Geology, Craft, Creative Writing, Yoga, Dance, Indoor Games, Art, Travel, International Film, Architecture, Wildlife, the Green Economy and offsite visits, exploring Skipton and Bingley, and a visit to Skipton Auction Market.

**What a showcase for Craven u3a, doing what it does best**

*Linda Hoole*

## Allotment Group



Here is Helena, leader of the Allotment Group receiving a cheque for £89.62 from the representatives of the now-closed Sunflower Allotment Society. This society was a Keighley-based charity who used working on an allotment to help support local disadvantaged people. Sadly, the charity has recently closed.

One of their trustees John Barfoot, who is a Cravenu3a member, saw Helena's appeal for tools and suggested to the trustees of the Sunflower Society that the allotment group would be a suitable recipient of their gardening tools and the balance of their bank account. John and their secretary visited the allotments to give their kind donation.

## Coffee mornings

The forthcoming coffee morning on **11 May** will address a pressing social issue when we hear from the Bradford-based charity Homeless not Hopeless. Some of you may have seen them on Look North earlier this week, discussing the impact of the proposed closure of the Forster Square Arches.

The final meeting for the summer will be on **8 June**, when former woman police officer, Sally Bissett, will be speaking.

Back in April members heard a fascinating talk from Frank Waller about his time as an internee in Japanese-occupied China during WW2.

## ***The u3a Festival – University of York***

*This is the u3a movement's first ever Festival, taking place on 18-20 July.*

*Tickets and full information are now available [here](#)*

*It's a packed programme, and there is plenty of parking available.*



## On Yer Bike !

Yep ...we're now up and running – well, “riding”! The launch of the Craven u3a E-biking Group took place on 25 April. It was, fortunately, a dry and bright – but rather chilly – day when the group met for their first outing at The Dalesman café in Gargrave. For various reasons the turnout was down by 50%, so just four hardy souls braved the brisk northwesterly breeze to explore the local lanes around Hetton, Winterburn, Esholt, Calton, Airton, Otterburn and Bell Busk. It was, in a sense, a voyage of discovery... can we all remember how to ride a bike? do we know where we're heading? what if it rains? how fit do we need to be? where's the next café stop?



In the event, all went well. We all covered at least 40km (25 miles) - with an extra 10km for those who cycled to Gargrave from Skipton along the canal. We deliberately avoided as much traffic as possible and we had a very pleasant lunch stop at the Farm Shop in Airton.



We are all now looking forward to our next outing which will be held on **Friday 10 May**. If you fancy getting back on two wheels and improving your fitness then why not give it a go? You can join the group via Beacon... or, if it's easier, just contact either me or Linda Hoole, our Group Leader.

*Geoff Wilkinson*

## National u3a online events schedule for May

Here's just a selection of things you can enjoy from the comfort of your home.

Osteoporosis and Bone Health. Friday 3 May at 2pm

The Harlem Renaissance – Thursday 9 May at 2pm

Turner's Timeless Treasures – Tuesday 14 May at 10 am

Understanding Online Safety – Tuesday 21 May at 2pm

Full details and how to sign up are [here](#)

## Last but certainly not least, a poetic tribute to David Wiseman, from Antony Dean, a member of the Popular Music group.

*Our David's a man of such class,  
It's our class on Tuesdays you see;  
A favourite is Mario Lanza,  
With a stentorian top high C.*

*We're always ready for Jolson,  
Angela, Trevor and me,  
Shame we never had chance  
To climb upon his knee.*

*The dance band days with Bowllly,  
Are treasured by at least thirty three,  
His voice was always creamy,  
And went down well with tea.*

*Newley is such a wonder,  
All three of us have to agree,  
A remarkable talent with also,  
The ego to let it run free.*

*Hope you like this, David,  
And it fills you full of glee*

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