



CRAVEN U3A NEWSLETTER

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Dates for your Diary:

12 October – Coffee morning with speaker at Champions, 10 for 10.30 am

9 November - Coffee morning with speaker at Champions, 10 for 10.30 am

11 December- u3a Carol Service at Christ Church, Skipton

I'm Just Down at the Allotment...

Craven u3a's allotment group looks after one full size plot plus a second half plot. It also does a lot of work on the community allotment at Broughton Road Skipton where it has created two small orchards and two garden areas, as well as using the greenhouse for growing tomatoes on that plot.



It has been a very mixed season this year. The cold wet spring delayed germination and despite repeated sowing we never managed to get a crop of climbing beans which is almost unheard of. Talking to other vegetable growers we discovered that we were not alone.

Other small plants that we put out provided a continuous food supply for the resident slugs and snails. We discovered that the mild winter hadn't killed off the usual number of garden pests. Again we were not alone in having our hard work eaten as one of our group was told by experts at Harlow Carr that they were suffering in the same way.

Not to be deterred we continued to meet to work together, enjoy putting the world to rights over our morning refreshments, and discussing plans as to how

to succeed in growing something when the weather and bugs weren't working against us.

We have had successes this year with garlic and onions, crops that were planted last autumn and in the wet spring. Our tomatoes have produced well, from tiny cherry varieties to enormous beef ones. We have been trying to taste-test to see which we should focus on next year. One thing that we do regularly succeed with are cauliflowers, even though the books say that they are difficult to grow. And this year for the first time we have had a crop of blueberries, something that most members of the group enjoy eating.



At the moment we have leeks and good range of winter brassicas growing. We're working on a new strawberry bed and are going to try planting broad beans in the autumn, something not done before.

One of our group is very fond of growing flowers. Her sunflowers grew well, and on Sunday bunches of sweet peas and asters were picked for the group to share. The cold weather winds and shorter days will soon curtail their flowering and we will begin our preparations for next year's growing season.

If anyone is interested in seeing the allotments we meet on Sunday mornings at plot 39 Broughton Road Allotments. Pop in to see us working.

Helena Tudhope

Group vacancies

There are still spaces left in quite a few of the groups. It is worth having a browse through the programme to see if there is any other activity or group that may interest you.

History Happens

Dear members, we have only just started the new u3a term, and here I am, raising the matter of a possible new course to run from September 2025. This is, however, to give plenty of notice to potential speakers, so that they have time to think and prepare.

A number of group leaders and members have been discussing the idea of a new group on the subject of history for the year starting September 2025. The idea is for a group to run like Literary Lives, Geography Forum, or Victorians, where many speakers contribute individual sessions, and the group leaders co-ordinate the programme.

It takes time to research and write a talk on a historical subject, hence the early warning. We shall start to plan the programme of talks from February 2025, but we want to encourage possible speakers to think ahead, if there is a topic they think they might like to offer.

We very much welcome speakers who are new to giving a talk on a u3a course. There will be, I am sure, well-known favourites on the speakers' list, but we want new contributors and fresh material as well.

Many of us have a subject dear to our heart that we would like to communicate to others – don't be deterred if you are not used to speaking in public. The audiences are always supportive, and we can give help and advice to anyone who wants to try their hand.



*Christine de Pizan,
Historian, 1364-1430*

As for subjects, we want to encourage a broad sweep. From ancient or pre-history up to the end of the 20th century. On thematic subjects from architecture to science, from philosophy to domestic crafts. On the nature and role of history. From international events to quirky, forgotten histories. But always, we hope, outward-looking, stimulating and entertaining.

If you would like to discuss anything, or seek information at this stage, please get in touch with me, Jane Houlton, at jane.houlton@btopenworld.com. It is not until February 2025 that we shall begin to put a programme together, and would plan then to invite contributions via the Newsletter.

Jane Houlton

On The Green

I've been enjoying Crown Green Bowling on a Friday lunchtime for three years now. During that time, as well as learning a few bowling skills I have really enjoyed the company of a great bunch of people. Our skills vary from the superb to the frankly cor' blimey, but everyone is so kind and helpful. This was amply demonstrated recently when we played an end of term tournament. Fours were randomly picked and so I bowled with many people who are not part of my usual pairings. Everyone was so helpful and friendly. It's not elitist at all.

But most weeks I bowl with three other people out of a group of about seven who are my regular team mates. We can't all make every week so it generally works out well. If we are more than four, we can always be embraced by another team or split up into smaller groups. I'm sure we are seen by the rest as the naughty corner because we do chat too much and giggle a lot. None of us are competitive, except with ourselves. All of us genuinely want to improve our own game and are quick to congratulate our friends on a good shot, good line, good length; in fact, anything positive. When it goes wrong you can always blame the green!



We are indebted to our leader for his organisation, friendly approach and his coaching ability. Keith Waddington is the king of the green and we all appreciate the time he gives to ensure that we can all enjoy our summer of bowling each year. Long may it continue.

Jay Cundell Walker

Positive Progress Towards a Green Economy

“We don’t need to worry about the effects of climate change because they’ll come up with technological solutions like carbon storage and anyway China’s carbon emissions are far worse than ours so what’s point of us changing our behaviour?”

Politicians and governments everywhere are so sensitive to these voter reactions that they’re backtracking on efforts to reach net zero. The phrase itself has become a buzz word for an attack on modern western lifestyles. This despite the fact that the scientific evidence for the impact of the climate crisis grows ever stronger.



But, all round the world, largely unreported by mainstream media, a vast amount is being done by business, community and charity organisations to transition away from fossil fuels and to make their activities and processes more environmentally friendly and sustainable. China is investing more money in renewables than the rest of the world put together. India is actively pursuing green solutions.

We will be looking at these developments in the 6 sessions starting January 15th, covering areas like manufacturing, energy production, farming, gardening and transport. I shall come up with examples of schemes around the world, but also look at the feasibility of high-tech solutions and the extent to which the fossil fuel companies and Big Pharma subvert efforts to transition away from their products.

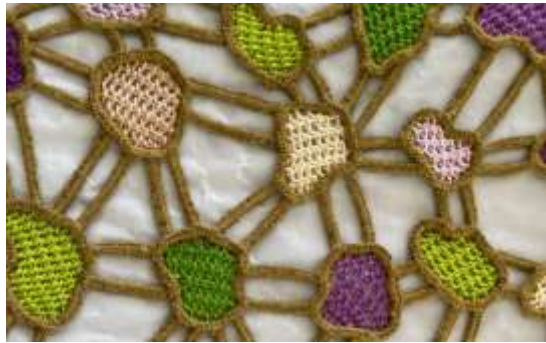
Mostly though I hope the sessions will be lively discussions about how, as individuals and local communities, we can help to transition the world to a more natural, sustainable future.

This group starts 15/01/25, weekly Wed. 2pm

Joan Nicholson

Curious about Lacemaking?

U3a member and keen lacemaker, Margaret Goode, would like to recommend the exhibition at the Town Hall running until 23 December called Curiosity: Contemporary Lace by 98 Lace. The group takes their name from 1998 when they came together and since then they have exhibited regularly throughout the UK. Their highly individual pieces are based on items in Skipton Museum ranging from ammonites to a box of Dewhurst's cotton threads



Craven u3a news

Eric Jackson will be returning to speak at October's monthly meeting on Sat 12 October, the subject being Monuments from Around the World.

Attendance at the Summer Programme at Ermysted's was up from 180 to 250 this year, a big increase. It also really helped our finances, producing a surplus £1718.

Some-one told me today how much she enjoyed one of the National u3a's online talks that she had learned about through this newsletter.

Here are a few more upcoming events which may take your fancy:

The Vital Role Chemistry has to play in Saving our Planet – 11 Oct, 2pm

My work at Bletchley Park 'code-breaking factory' – 14 Oct 2pm

Food, Foresight and the Future of Farming – 18 Oct 11am

A Life in Expeditions – 24 Oct 2pm

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events>



Inquisitive sheep inspecting Wharfedale Walkers' luncheon arrangements!

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The Race by *Barbara Bentley, Creative Writing Group*

Under Committee rules, every competitor had to be over eighteen, a resident of the town and a female. Almost all of these rules could be debated endlessly, and for sure competition was stiff. The prize would be the glory of winning, because, for some reason, everybody on the Headland regarded this race as the *crème de la crème*, the bees knees, the measure by which every female in every Headland family would be measured. Training began in July, with competitive sandbag heaving, and races along the shore, late at night, wearing only skirts tucked into bloomers and a heavy frown.

During August Bank Holiday week, fair weather or foul, the Games were held. There was a sandcastle competition, a sea shanty writing thing in the pub, and all children of school age were dragooned into throwing pretend eggs off a spoon, tying their legs together for the three legged, and racing along the beach for some arbitrarily decided 100-yard dash. The rugby club's dressing up competition, which was really an excuse for elderly rugby players to shove balloons down their fronts, apply haphazard lipstick and wobble about in high heeled shoes, was a big thing. Sometimes fights broke out over who was the most convincing cross dresser.

Anyway, come the Sunday, all the eligible females would assemble on the promenade for the Big Race. Old hands would be examining the forearms of the more brawny women, scrolling through the ancestry of each and every one of these ladies, and counting on ten fingers how old some of the more mature ones among them could be. It was impossible to tell, to be fair. Sea air has a maturing effect on a young person's skin.

All the town was there: betting took place. Favourite was Annie Horsley, a strongly muscled young woman with red hair and a voice like a foghorn. However, young Nancy Garbutt was strongly favoured by the men who had been watching her training on the fish quay, handling the herring boxes as they arrived each morning. Many young women were there for the first time, having just turned eighteen and keen to show off their wares. There was a lot of hair tossing and the tucking of skirts into bloomers, but at last was heard the piercing shrill of the bosun's whistle and they all lined up at the start.

They were allowed to choose their own bait shovel from a pile on the dock side, and when the whistle blew again, they sprinted to the beach below the sea wall and began to dig furiously. The more knowing of them chose spots in the sand where a tiny blow hole could be perceived, but some of the girls went hell for leather plunging their shovels wherever they could in the damp sand. Even when you have found your lug worm, you can't always dig it up as they are tenacious creatures with a lot of legs and they hold onto the sides of their holes until they can slip down them and disappear forever.

Anyway, most of these girls had had a lot of practice in exactly this procedure, so it wasn't be long before they were off again, squirming lug worm in hand, shovel cast

aside, thundering along the beach to the finishing line, where a group of respected judges hovered warily, waiting for the first of them to arrive.

The finish was undignified and vociferous. Annie tried to kick Nancy's legs from under her and a slight sandy haired girl with crossed eyes sneaked alongside and slapped her lug worm down on the judge's table while the other two were still tearing each other's hair out.

So that was that. Both favourites lost out because of sheer bloody mindedness and that year the race was won by the pilot's daughter Maureen, who nobody reckoned, but who was single-minded enough to grit her teeth and go for gold, and who also didn't mind the disgusting slime plop the worm was leaking onto her palm.

Ed. - You don't need to be in the Creative Writing Group to submit something you have written for the newsletter.

Films

Nothing exciting to do one Tuesday or Thursday afternoon? Pop down to Champions Hall in Skipton. Here's the line-up for October:

Tuesday Films

October 8th - Phantom of the Open (British) running time 106mins

October 15th - The Miracle Club (Irish/UK), running time 90mins

October 22nd - Man in the Hat (quirky French/English) running time 95mins

October 29th - Il Ladro Di Bambini (Italian), running time 111mins.

Thursday Films

October 10th - The Grapes of Wrath, running time 2hrs

October 17th - The 100ft Journey, running time 2hours

October 24th - The Post, running time 1hr 56mins

October 31st - Three Colours Blue (French), running time 99mins.

We meet at Champions Church, 1.15 for 1.30pm and break part way for tea/coffee and biscuits.

The Show Goes On!

When u3a member Jay Cundell Walker invited questions after her talk at our Champions Hall meeting last month, she was asked, lightheartedly, how she retained her sanity. Good question!

Many readers will have enjoyed watching plays or musicals directed by Jay at various locations, including Ilkley Playhouse and Skipton Town Hall. She has been doing so since the early 1980s and is currently retaining her sanity, I hope, while completing final rehearsals for Skipton Musical Theatre's *Oliver!* at the Town Hall later this month (22– 26 October). It is an amateur production, but Jay was quick to point out that "amateur" simply means doing something for the love of it. In her case, that affection started when she made her first stage appearance at the age of six, encouraged by her mother Jacqueline Walker, a former dance teacher and also a u3a member.



Jay provided her Champions Hall audience with a fascinating insight into the trials and tribulations associated with a typical amateur production. An orchestra and musical director will need to be paid, a venue hired, along with sound and lighting systems, sets, costumes and props. Programmes need to be printed, together with promotional material, while strict licensing laws apply to staging performances - a licence can cost 15% of box office takings, for example.

It's not unknown for an amateur musical production to need a total budget of between £30,000 and £60,000. So even a week of sell-out audiences might result in only a modest profit.

But Jay is clearly finding immense satisfaction in her work. With her current project *Oliver!* in mind, it was reassuring to hear her say that working with young people in a cast is a privilege.

Mike Eaton