



CRAVEN U3A NEWSLETTER

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Dates for your Diary:

*8 March - Coffee morning
with speaker at Champions,
10 for 10.30 am*

*26 March – u3a Orchestra
concert, 2.30 pm at Skipton
Baptist Church*

CRAVEN u3a TURNS 40 IN 2025!

We need your help to celebrate 40 amazing years

To celebrate this ruby milestone in Craven u3a's history, the executive committee would like to hold a range of events in 2025 but we cannot do this without your help!

We are looking for volunteers to join a working party, reporting back to the committee, to share ideas and to help organise events. The first meeting will be held before Friday 7 March, in time to report back to the committee, with the second meeting held before the end of March to get cracking on organisation and publicity.

Ideas so far include:

- Quiz
- Picnic/Sports Event
- Treasure Hunt
- Dance
- Concert/performing arts

So, if you would like to help us in any way to celebrate our 40th anniversary, please get in touch with Linda Hoole:

lindahoole@yahoo.co.uk Mobile: 07773 407628

u3a Orchestra Annual

The orchestra is delighted to start the Craven u3a 40th anniversary celebrations.

Join us on Wednesday **26 March** at 2.30 in Skipton Baptist Church for our annual concert. Admission is free with refreshments afterwards. We will be making a collection for charity.

The programme will include music for all tastes, ranging from Byrd to Gershwin by way of Schubert, Elgar, Sullivan and others.

This year we are pleased to welcome some guests. The u3a Recorder Ensemble and some handbell ringers will also be playing. Their conductor, Jean Kendrew, is retiring at the end of this season. This is an opportunity to thank her for her work over many years.

We are practising hard and looking forward to entertaining a large audience. Put the date in your diary now!



CELEBRATING CRAVEN U3A'S FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY YEAR



Concert

Craven u3a Orchestra

Conductor: Peter Young
plus guests

U3A Recorder Ensemble Handbell Ringers

2.30pm Wednesday 26 March
Skipton Baptist Church

Admission free * Refreshments * Collection for charity



New Bridge for Improvers Group for 2025-26

A course for those who have played at least a year of bridge and would like to improve their duplicate bidding and play. They would learn a few new 'tricks', and bid and play set hands that illustrate particular points. If you want more information, contact the group leader Douglas Goode.

01756 229188



Skipton Library - Call for Help

Sometime ago (possibly pre-covid!) I got in touch to let the u3a members know that the library was looking for volunteers, in case any of them had a spare hour or two to help us out. This worked quite well and several people did get in touch.

Once again, the library is looking for volunteers, both in the library generally, and specifically for tasks like the Home Library Service. We offer ongoing training and support. Please get in touch if you can help.

Helene Jordan Skipton Library



A NEW YORKSHIRE FLOWER SHOW



The RHS flower show, 16 – 20 July at Wentworth Woodhouse, will be well worth a visit. There will be colourful garden displays, expert talks and lots of family activities to enjoy.

(Bibbys of Ingleton will be running a coach trip on 19 July if anyone is interested)

For food lovers there will be a choice of delicious street food from all around the world and a 'Great Tastes market' with specialty cheeses and artisan bakes. Apparently there will also be live music. It promises to be a grand day out and a chance to support a new Yorkshire event

Mick Richings

The joys of being a Group Leader

Group Leaders have fun! They are also u3a members just like you.

One of the founding principles of the u3a is that there is no distinction between leaders and members. Anyone can be a leader if they want.

Each year, some groups cease, some start. For example, I am giving up all my u3a leadership roles in the summer. This will affect 2-Hour Hiking, Astronomy, Arthurian Legends and Geology Walks. It's great if you can become a leader in an existing group to carry it forward. It's also great if you want to explore your own ideas for a u3a group.

Best of all, you don't have to do it all yourself, especially if you have other commitments. Most u3a groups are run by more than one Group Leader.

Next year's u3a programme for 2025-26 is put together in the spring. So there's time to think about being a Group Leader yourself, maybe with a friend or two. All you need is enthusiasm and a delight in meeting like-minded people.

Being a Group Leader has given me great joy. It's an excellent way to make friends, and to share experiences and the fun of being in the u3a.

Keith Berrington

Poetry Please?

With Keith's comments in mind I am tentatively thinking about running a small (max. 10 people, in my home) poetry group next year, where we would revisit, or perhaps encounter for the first time, some of "The Nation's Favourite Poems", based around, but not exclusively, an old BBC publication of that name. We would read and listen to poems, talk about them, and maybe explore something of the poets' lives. This would not be in the slightest bit 'highbrow', so if you have never read a poem in your life that would be absolutely fine! If I am not the only person who would like to do this, please let me know, preferably before April, when the new programme is being compiled.

Liz Morrison – elizam2207@gmail.com

Acadia National Park, Maine, USA

During our previous holidays in the USA we visited nine different National Parks and in 2024 we decided to visit Acadia National Park, as this looked quite different.

In September, we flew to Boston, staying over for a couple of days; we walked the Freedom Trail and picked up the hire car. We then drove just under 300 miles to Acadia, stopping off for two days and walking in the Camden Hills on the way.

Acadia National Park is on an island connected to the mainland by a road bridge. The Park is smaller than the Yorkshire Dales, being approximately 30 miles across. It has five long land ridges and the highest is 1530 feet. It has 150 miles of trails on the hills and coast. It is a very compact park, perfect for a week's walking.



The Park was established in 1916 by President Woodrow Wilson. Most of the land was donated by John Rockefeller Jr., who had been concerned in 1913 about the prospect of the motor car. He had therefore constructed 45 miles of high standard carriage roads for horse and cart traffic and no cars allowed. These carriage roads are still in good condition and are now reserved for cyclists, horse riders and cross-country skiers in the winter.

We stayed in a very nice cabin site just outside the park. We paid our Park entry fee for the week of \$35, which allowed us to park in their designated parking areas. It also covered the free use of their 17 Island Explorer buses that throughout the day, drive continuously seven varied routes around the island. They stop at the start of all hill and coastal walks and will pick you up at the end of the day either at a stop or by hailing them down. We did not use our car all week for any of the walks; we just used this first-class bus service.

The island geology is pink granite and most of the hills had been cleaned by the ancient glaciers. The first walk we did was the 1530ft Mount Cadillac ridge. You start at sea level and walk through a few hundred feet

of trees onto the pink granite. This is easy to walk upon and you suddenly saw the wonderful sea views around the island. The paths were well marked and it was at a very gentle level. We were very fortunate with the excellent weather and clear visibility. We saw eagles and vultures flying on the flanks of the hill. It was a relatively quiet path and everyone we did meet was very friendly. We were reminded about the glaciated history as we occasionally saw large "erratic" boulders that had been deposited by the glacier. When we arrived at the summit, we found a quiet spot for lunch and descended down to a quiet valley, back to the road and bus stop. A very pleasant 8 mile route.

We did three ridge walks and two coastal walks. Most days we saw bald eagles and turkey vultures soaring. We also saw a spectacular woodpecker and we occasionally spotted, and regularly heard, chipmunks. The coastal walks were also spectacular, with big waves crashing onto the pink granite cliffs. We saw lots of loons swimming in flocks out at sea. There were two nice sandy beaches. We lunched at one of them and a cheeky gull silently glided up from behind and stole my sandwich out of my hand!



We did drive down to the south of the island to South West Harbour and took a boat trip around the southern coastal area. We got some great views of seals, ospreys, and porpoises, and close-up views of bald eagles sitting in the trees.

After a great week we drove back to Boston, stopping for three nights in Portland –a fascinating town and surrounding area.



Portland
Lighthouse

Graham Reay

New groups for this spring, which you can join now

Calling all Dog Walkers - Come and join the Happy Tails Hikers

Jane Mitchell invites you and your dog, to join her on walks, mostly in the Dales and local area. The walks are not gentle strolls. They will average about 6 to 7 miles, every two weeks on Mondays or Tuesdays, with a maximum of 7 dogs per walk. The aim is to walk between April and June 2025 and start again in September.

Jane will set up a Whatsapp group for group communication, to manage weather and potential route changes, especially in the winter months. Obviously dogs will need to be kept on leads for certain types of terrain and if livestock in the area. If any cows are present, the walk will detour away from them.

If you are interested in joining Jane, please email me and I will pass your details to her. Alternatively, you can enrol straightaway on Beacon.

Anne MacDonald

anne.f.macdonald@btinternet.com

U3a Social Tennis

Social tennis in Gargrave

Craven Lawn Tennis Club has kindly agreed to open their Club to u3a members on Monday afternoons, commencing in early May.

The Club will incorporate some tennis coaching in the session, and provide balls and rackets.

The Club has 3 All Weather Courts and 4 Grass Courts. The Grass Courts can be used when weather conditions allow.

The Court fees will be £3.00 per person per session.

To express an interest and to allow the Tennis Club to gauge interest please contact Anne MacDonald (see above).

Dave Smith

Monthly meeting news

Cakes

We need more volunteers to make cakes! Please contact Anne MacDonald anne.f.macdonald@btinternet.com if you can help.

Children and Smartphones

The new year began well with 55 members present for a fascinating, if alarming, insight into the many problems created by children's use of smartphones. I learnt that an astonishing 89 % of 12 year olds own one, and are subject to the very addictive algorithms of the social media apps. Issues around their accessing pornography and other adult material, receiving sexts, getting a virtual boyfriend, as well as being bullied, advised on self-harm and harming, painted a worrying picture of the lack of proper control of these worlds in your pocket. We heard about school initiatives to get parents to sign a pact that they would not buy smartphones for their children until they were at least 14, and about a private members bill that the two speakers are urging our Skipton & Ripon MP, Julian Smith, to support. Many young people are themselves aware they are addicted to phone use and wish their younger siblings a more controlled experience. Food for thought for the many grandparents in the room.

A copy of the accompanying powerpoint is available from Liz Morrison if anyone would like to see the detail.

Jacqui Eames



Upcoming

On 8 March, we will welcome **Dave Stannard, author of Leeds Playhouse: A Tale of Two Theatres** (which attendees will be able to purchase at half its cover price).

National u3a online Events – Why not give them a try?

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

Here's a selection:

Initiatives for Care – Examples of inspirational, community level initiatives
Thursday 27 February at 2pm

Philosophy as a way of life –
Friday 28 February at 2pm

The Gothic – Tracing the Genre from Medieval Architecture to The Goths
Friday 7 March at 2pm

Sustainable Travel in Europe
Wednesday 12 March at 7pm

Making your smartphone or tablet easier to use as you get older
Tuesday 18 March at 2pm

Cryptic Crosswords for Beginners: 6 session course
Thursday 20 March at 10am

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