



**September 2025**

## **CRAVEN U3A NEWSLETTER**

### **2025 -26 Programme Update**

The new u3a year is starting and we have over 80 activities in the programme, which compared with many other u3as is a really impressive number. A warm welcome to new members joining this year. With a really high membership our challenge is being able to give everyone a place on every group they wished to join. This is not always possible, particularly as there is a maximum capacity for many venues, and some groups have waiting lists, but we have done our best.

However, on page 2 you will find a list of the groups where there are still available spaces. Take a look to see if there is anything you fancy.

We have also asked the Group Leaders to monitor attendance at the first few sessions. If someone does not attend for three consecutive weeks without explaining their absence they should be removed from the group so someone

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#### ***Dates for your diary:***

*11 October - Coffee morning with speaker at Champions- 10 for 10.30*

*8 November - Coffee morning with speaker at Champions- 10 for 10.30*

*28 November – Film Night, Gargrave Village Hall 5-9pm*

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else can take their place.

Don't forget that Group Leaders at some venues need to collect a small charge towards the venue cost (details in the programme). Please bring along cash to the first session you attend.

Most importantly, many thanks to our wonderful Group Leaders. Without their support there would not be a Craven u3a Programme!

We are always open to suggestions for new group activities and also any feedback that would help us enhance your experience in our u3a

I really hope you enjoy all the activities in the new Programme.

*Anne MacDonald*

### **Groups with spaces:**

Walking Groups

Allotment

Art 1840-1900

Art and Architecture

Badminton

Bird Watching

Book groups

Three Bridge groups

Craven Orchestra

E Biking

German

History of Art

Illuminating Medieval Manuscripts

Motor Cycle

Music Theory, Creativity, Imp

Nature Rambles

Photo

Popular Music

Racketball

Railway Study

Recorders

Spanish Advanced

Stories of Scientists

Sunday Lunch

Victorian Novels

Walking Cricket

## Craven U3A 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations continue!

Our next event is an 80s Film Night at Gargrave Village Hall on Friday 28 November from 5-9pm. The venue has plenty of parking. There is no bar so bring your own drinks!

The event is open to members, family and friends with the cost being £5 per attendee.

### The arrangements are as follows:

5pm – arrive and get comfortably ensconced at a table with chosen companions

5.30pm - Part 1, screening of ***A Local Hero***, an excellent, entertaining film addressing serious issues in an uplifting way and not regularly on TV!

6.30 - 7.15pm - supper break.

7.15 - 8.30pm - Part 2, watch rest of film.

### Administration

Please email [eamesjackie@gmail.com](mailto:eamesjackie@gmail.com) by 14 November with your order to confirm numbers and food requirements.

The options for payment are:

- Ideally payment of £5 should be by BACS or cheque, details below
- Cash at the October and November monthly meetings.

The supper is 'Pie and Peas'. Please note vegetarian, vegan and gluten-free options are available, plus you can choose between mushy and garden peas.

All Jacqui needs is a contact phone number, the number of people you are booking for, their food choices, and your chosen method of payment.

### Payment methods

- BACS – Account name Craven u3a; sort code 20-78-42; account number 83984230, reference FM – Last name
- Cheque – payable to Craven u3a, post to M Richings, 6 Summer Manor, Burley in Wharfedale, Ilkley, LS29 7NA
- Cash - monthly meetings either 11<sup>th</sup> October or 8<sup>th</sup> November.

Seats will be allocated on a first come basis, so book early or you could be disappointed 😞

*Mick Richings, Chair*

## Would you like to make your own cards for Christmas?



I ran a class on making fabric cards at the summer school and some of the participants have asked for another session on making Christmas cards. I plan to run a class on Wednesday 5 Nov 10am - 12 noon at the sports hub at Sandylands. This will be open both to people who came on the summer school class and those who didn't, up to a maximum of 10 people. I won't charge for resources but would appreciate a donation to Yorkshire Cat Rescue if you are able to do this. If you would like to attend the class, or have any questions about it, please email me – [wendywoo.22@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:wendywoo.22@hotmail.co.uk).

*Wendy Brown*

## 40<sup>th</sup> Celebration - Tuesday and Thursday Walking Group

On 18 September Craven u3a Walking Group celebrated its 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with three walks starting from Malham on the same day, re-creating its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with a long 13 mile walk, a medium 8-miler, and a shorter walk of 6½ miles.



The short walk included two octogenarians and a 95 year old. We climbed the steps at the Cove and went on to Janet's Foss, which was in full flow, hiding the cave of Jennet, the legendary queen of the fairies. It was traditionally used for sheep dipping, drawing in local inhabitants for a social occasion. But the only dipping we saw was that of two Dipper birds. Onto Hanlith, where we looked for the Badger weathervane, the statue of St Francis, and the knight on Hanlith Hall. On our way back to Malham, we stopped at Aire Head spring, the source of the river Aire.

The 8 mile walk set off with 21 people and walked up to Janet's Foss and spectacular Gordale Scar, before heading over the back of Malham Cove towards Malham Tarn. Once on the top the rain started, so we cut back along the Pennine Way, past Coomb Hill and through the Scar down towards



the Cove. The wet weather made the descent down the limestone steps tricky. It was decided that the Cove was likely to be too slippery to cross, so we cut back to come down the road into Malham.

The 13 mile walk went well with a select group of 6. The route took us past Malham Cove, and up to Mastiles Lane where we headed up onto the limestone behind Malham Tarn House before dropping onto the Pennine Way and back down the Airedale Way. The weather stayed dry until lunchtime after which we were subjected to fine drizzle.



Each walk was scheduled to finish at around the same time at the Lister Arms in Malham so we could all get together for tea, coffee, and scones. A great way to mark the thousands of walks enjoyed by many hundreds of people – in all sorts of weather – since the u3a Walking Group was formed all those years ago!

*George Mackley*

## **Malvern u3a on *Only Connect* – article (edited) courtesy of u3a Friends Newsletter**

In 2024 three members of Malvern u3a, Pam, Elizabeth and Aidan, applied successfully to appear on the TV quiz show *Only Connect*. People who enjoy quizzes will already know that you have to avoid any social commitments on Monday evenings, as that is quiz night on BBC 2. *Mastermind*, *Only Connect* and *University Challenge* follow each other. *Only Connect* is chaired by Victoria Coren Mitchell, and each episode features two teams of three. There are four rounds in which you have to make connections between seemingly unrelated items.

### **Applying to be on the programme**

In late 2023 the three of us discovered we had a shared interest in this programme and decided to apply. Although it was only a few days before the deadline for applications, we contacted the programme and started the application process.

Our first test was to complete some sample questions at home. We had to fill in some personal information including the classic 'which three words best describe you?' We also had to come up with a suggested team name. After bouncing a few ideas around, we settled on 'The Third Agers'.

We were invited to a Zoom audition in January. That took place with a casting unit running through more questions, this time under exam conditions to see how we interacted as a team. We couldn't answer everything but had positive feedback.

After a few weeks on tenterhooks we received a call saying we had made the final selection - cue email with subject title of 'OMG!!!!'

### **Preparing for the first episode**

We were given recording dates we had to be available for and advice on what we could and could not wear. These instructions included 'please avoid any clothing with logos, any visible branding or motifs, fine stripes, small checks, block white or block black'.

We each had to provide ten interesting facts about ourselves to introduce each of us at the start of the programme. We then started to practise quizzes together, looking at past episodes and working our way through two *Only Connect* paperbacks. Unlike something like *Mastermind*, *Only Connect* isn't the sort of quiz you can revise facts for. But you can think about strategies for tackling each type of question.

The competition starts with 16 teams. The first block of filming is spread over four days with 4 teams being present on each day. It's not a straight knockout - every

team is guaranteed at least two matches no matter whether they win or lose their first game.

## Filming

When we arrived at the Cardiff studios for filming in May, we met many different people including the other three teams who would be competing that day. One team had applied as individuals and had only met in person for the first time the day before. There was a Scottish team who were very involved in politics, and ourselves, clearly the oldest there, but, according to Victoria, not the oldest team to ever appear on the programme.

The whole filming process was fascinating - we had no idea there were so many people involved. There were question setters, lighting and sound engineers, many camera operators, a floor manager, and others whose role was behind the scene - perhaps 40-50 people all there just for our show. We had a lady help with make-up and a techie fit us with microphones. Just before our first game we were taken onto

set and given precise instructions on how to sit, where to look etc.



Victoria was charming, generous and very friendly and funny. The first time she came onto set, she immediately looked over to us and said something like 'University of the Third Age - an excellent institution I thoroughly approve of! -

definitely going to ask you about that'. Before the filming started, she gave both teams some excellent advice along the lines of 'Try not to rush, the whole thing will go by really quickly and remember to enjoy yourselves'.

The Third Agers were eliminated after their second appearance, albeit with an impressive 22 points, in late October 2024, but Victoria's parting remark was "and I couldn't admire more your attitude... studying and learning new things, you're an inspiration to us all" - Watch here:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m0024hzj/only-connect-series-20-12-uisge-beathas-v-third-agers>



### **Craven u3a WhatsApp Groups Community**

We set up this community this summer as a new way of helping members to participate in groups' discussions, and also help group leaders to manage the groups. We had a bit of a bumpy start as we had some intrusions which I am pretty sure were due to a member or members passing on the access code. I have cracked down since then and we have not had any more intrusions, and the system is pretty stable now. We have been through a fairly steep learning curve.

I am really sorry if the intrusions caused any discomfort. I am aware that a few people left the community as a result.

I would really like to thank all the members who have stuck with the system. We now have 26 groups using the community and we are now seeing the system starting to work really well. I would also like to thank all those who sent me messages of support when we were having problems. Your support was very much appreciated.

I have now restricted access to prevent further intrusions but would be happy to help any Craven u3a member or group leader who wants to join the system or needs help in using the system.

*Doug Hirst*

### **Monthly meeting speakers Oct - Dec**


11 Oct: [Doug Rice-Bowen](#) (from Holy Trinity, a former opera singer) - [Me: My Music: My Faith](#)

8 Nov: [Bethan Gray](#) from Complementary Therapies - [Looking at the Human Being Holistically](#). Bethan runs yoga and meditation classes and trips but stresses importance of social contact/ community. A 71 year old member went on a trip and recommended her. She's lovely: I have met her and think she'll be a breath of fresh air.

13 Dec: [Jon Tomlinson](#), whose previous talk on the NHS was very well received - [The Settle Carlisle Railway](#)

*Jacqui Eames*

The Friends of the Settle- Carlisle Line are keen to publicise their free guided walks. No car needed as the walks are all to/from stations.




**Welcome to Friends of the Settle – Carlisle Line free guided walks**


Our free guided walks date back to the earliest FoSCL campaign aimed at preventing closure of the Settle – Carlisle train line. Visit our website at [foscl.org.uk](http://foscl.org.uk) to find out more about our history and how we continue to support England's most scenic railway.


All of our walks start and/or finish from train stations, usually on the Leeds – Settle – Carlisle Line, and do not require a car. There is no need to book in advance so just buy your train ticket and meet us at the station! See our website for train ticket tips.

Everyone is welcome but if you are new to hiking or have had a long break from it, please start with the easier walks. The landscape in this part of the country means that the route will usually include a hill or two, stiles to climb over and possibly tricky terrain. It is best to build up to longer, more strenuous walks so that you enjoy them and feel comfortable with the pace.


### NOVEMBER


**Sat 1<sup>st</sup>** **Saltaire and Baildon Hill Circular**  
From the dark satanic mill to the highest point in Baildon and beyond.  
**Important: see our website for train info.**  
Arrive: 09:10 Saltaire Depart: 16:42 Saltaire **12mi / 19.3km** 

**Sat 15<sup>th</sup>** **The Great Stainforth Run and Leap**  
On this leisurely paced walk in Ribblesdale we might see Salmo Salar!  
Arrive: 10:21 Settle Depart: 16:30 Settle **8mi / 12.9km** 


**Sat 29<sup>th</sup>** **Hellifield to Settle via Malham**  
A lovely walk passing through the popular village of Malham on the way to Settle.  
Arrive: 08:40 Hellifield Depart: 16:30 Settle **14mi / 22.5km** 


### JANUARY

**Sat 10<sup>th</sup>** **Ribblehead to Horton**  
A low-level walk through "Wild Ingleborough".  
Arrive: 10:38 Ribbleshead Depart: 16:21 Horton **7mi / 11.3km** 


**Sat 24<sup>th</sup>** **Cleatop Wood Settle Circular**  
A circular walk from Settle taking in Cleatop Wood, Scaleber Force and Attermire Scar.  
Arrive: 10:21 Settle Depart: 16:30 Settle **10mi / 16.1km** 


### OCTOBER

**Sat 4<sup>th</sup>** **Horton to Settle via Crummockdale**  
Visit limestone country with this walk through the enchanting landscape of Crummockdale.  
Arrive: 10:30 Horton Depart: 16:30 Settle **11mi / 17.7km** 


**Sat 18<sup>th</sup>** **Kirkby Stephen Circular**  
A chance to explore the countryside around Kirkby Stephen and visit the town.  
Arrive: 09:34 Kirkby Stephen Depart: 17:15 Kirkby Stephen **12mi / 19.3km** 


### DECEMBER




**Sat 13<sup>th</sup>** **Horton to Settle via Dry Rigg**  
Let's get into the Christmas spirit, bring Santa hats and nibbles to share. We'll round the day off taking in the delights of the cafes and pubs of Settle.  
Arrive: 10:30 Horton Depart: 16:30 Settle **8mi / 12.9km** 

**Sat 27<sup>th</sup>** **Skipton Circular via Flasby**  
Post Christmas Skipton circular, get your hats on, we're still in the season of goodwill!  
Arrive: 09:56 Skipton Depart: 16:59 Skipton **13mi / 21km** 

### FEBRUARY





**Sat 7<sup>th</sup>** **Gargrave Circular via Coniston Cold**  
A chance to walk some lesser known sections of the Pennine Way.  
Arrive: 10:03 Gargrave Depart: 16:47 Gargrave **9mi / 14.5km** 


**Sat 21<sup>st</sup>** **Kirkby Stephen Track and Trail**  
A slower paced scenic walk incorporating the "Northern Viaduct Round".  
Arrive: 11:05 Kirkby Stephen Depart: 17:15 Kirkby Stephen **7mi / 11.3km** 

**Winter along the Settle – Carlisle Line**

For more photos and to check for any last minute changes, cancellations or surprise additions! visit [foscl.org.uk/guided-walks](http://foscl.org.uk/guided-walks) or follow:

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