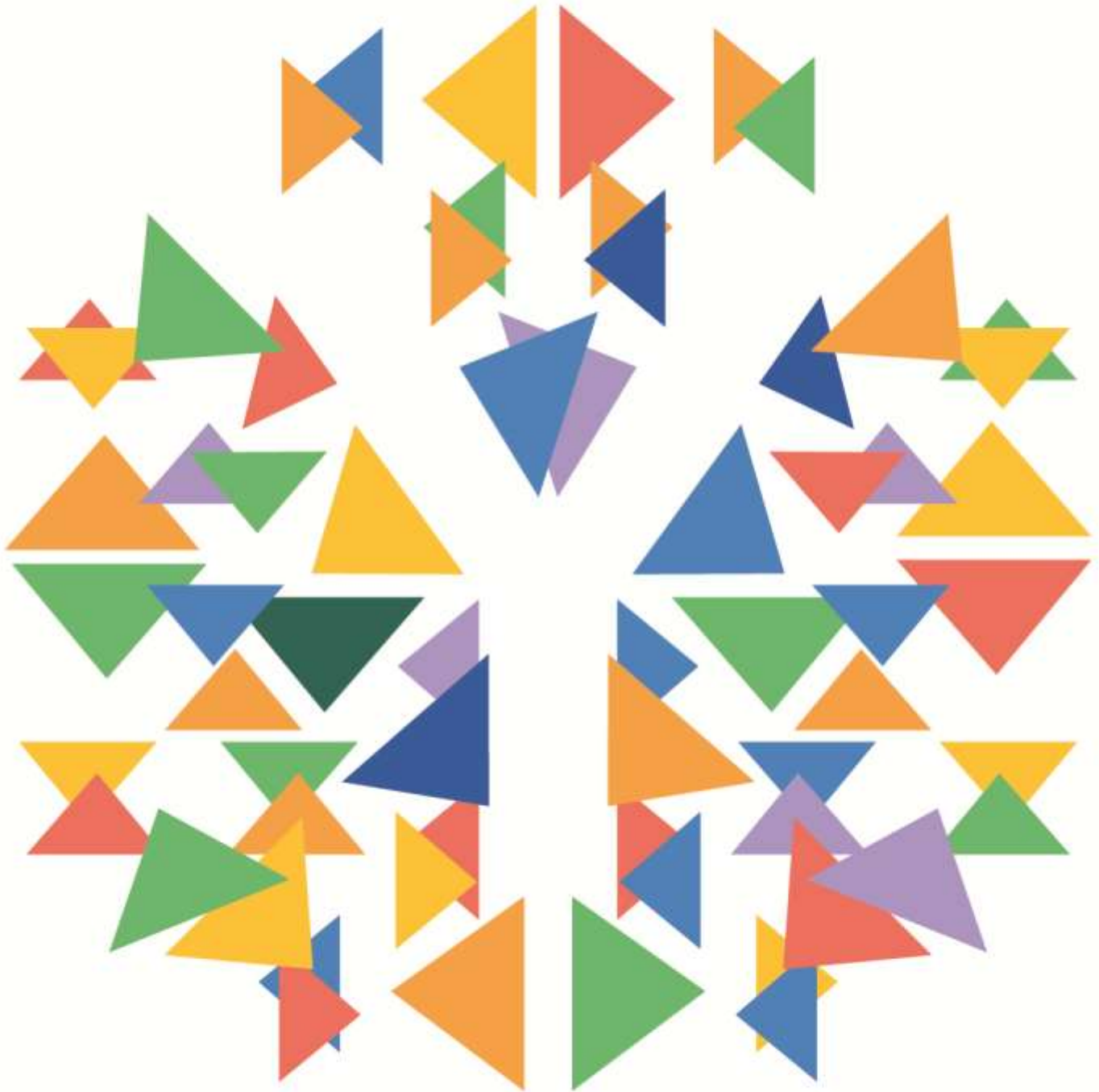


The u3a York Times

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Chair's Message

I hope this message finds you well and that you are continuing to enjoy all the u3a York offers.

A lot has happened since I last wrote. We are now operating as u3a York and have made progress with our bank accounts, one of which is up and running. I must say that this is proving to be very challenging and if you are ever in the position of needing to open a charity account it will certainly test your patience.

Sadly, we said goodbye to two of our Trustees and you will have seen us advertising for replacements in the Whatson, the most urgent being the need for a new Treasurer and for people to support the Finance Team.

On a positive note, at our AGM in April we were able to make the following announcements because of the large value of reserves we are holding:

- The membership renewal and joining fee for 2026-27 is reducing to £15.00.
- From the 1st of June 2026 we are discontinuing the charges for:
 - The entrance fee for Saturday Talks, which includes removing the need to pay for Zoom attendance. We will also be discontinuing the charge for refreshments but will be asking for voluntary contributions instead
 - All the meetings that take place at the u3a York Centre will now be free to members.

- Groups already meeting at the Friends Meeting House will also now be free to members.

The suspension of room fees will last until 31st July 2027. Leading up to that time the Board of Trustees will be monitoring how this affects our income and decide as to whether the suspension can be continued. The decision will be announced at the next AGM (April 2027) with Group Leaders being notified in advance.

This cessation of groups fees had caused some initial controversy as some group members had pre-paid and I hope that we have been able to address this issue to the satisfaction of everyone.

What else have we done? We've published a series of new documents:

- Our vision, mission and priorities
- The new u3a York Constitution (as approved at the April 2025 AGM)
- A new Risk Management Policy
- New expense claim forms

Our Office has seen some changes too with a change of layout and desks allowing for the room to be split in half during the busy renewal period when a private office area is required.

On a final note, have a wonderful summer break and we look forward to welcoming you back when the activities restart in September.

Karen Sawyer
Chair, u3a York
chair@u3ayork.org.uk

News from the Groups

Digital Photography Group 11901

The Digital Photography Group meets once a month on the 4th Thursday of every month at the u3a Centre 10–12pm.

At our meetings we review photographs taken by the members normally on a theme, and review any photographs posted by the group on the WhatsApp Group Chat.



The group members use Phone, Compact, Bridge, Single Lens Reflex and Mirrorless Digital Cameras. The group also arranges Photo Shoots: last year's was the Sea Birds at RSPB Bempton Cliffs, and we are currently planning a visit to Hebden Bridge.

Discussion on Photographic techniques occur within the group during the meeting as topics arise, with input coming from members with experience on the subject which can result in a presentation.



The photographs within this report are examples of members' work. The Group is open to new members.

*Stuart Calvert
Digital Photography*

Gigs and Concerts 12053

Sell-out for 1st Live Music Social

It was a full house at the first social event held by the Gigs and Concerts group in April. Nearly 50 people took advantage of the early-bird ticket offer and came along to Café FortyFive Vinyl to hear US/UK folk artist Brooks Williams and enjoy an exclusive u3a night out.



It was a good chance for people to get to know each other a bit better. Hopefully connections were made that will lead to sociable small-group meet-ups at future live music events in York and nearby. My idea for the group was to create an informal and dynamic community around live music. We've set up a WhatsApp chat to make this easier, however I do also email any important announcements to all group members so nobody should miss out.

The success of our April social suggests that exclusive u3a events may be a popular way forward for the group. Getting together to chat about gigs we've enjoyed independently has also been suggested.

*Jo Taylor-Greig
Gigs & Concerts*

Introduction to Printmaking with Linocut 12057

Confessions of a novice printmaker

I arrived at the first afternoon of the Printmaking with Linocut course with some trepidation, as I am not particularly creative, knew very little about the mechanics of printmaking, and sometimes struggle knowing left from right! However, my anxieties were soon allayed. We were a very friendly group of six, some of whom had done printmaking in the past and others complete beginners. The tutor, Kathryn Wright, is very knowledgeable and patient, and went through the techniques and tools thoroughly before we got started, as well as making good suggestions for design.

The venue, St Clements Hall, was spacious, bright and airy, with lots of space and surfaces for us to get messy with carvings and ink (which was fortunately water based and washed off completely so no harm done to the environment or our clothes!). It was a lovely environment to spend time in and once we were all set up, we did comment on what a calm and enjoyable experience it was, sitting and carving with some gentle chat, and showing off our work once we had done the printing.



By the end of the course, we were all confident in carving and printing, with some truly outstanding work coming through. As an absolute beginner I was extremely proud of what I had achieved,

especially my little bird on a branch – pictured here. We all agreed that it would be good to find a way to continue with printmaking in some form.

Beryl Oppenheim



Water Fitness Group 11311

There are still places for anyone who would like to join our water fitness group. You do not have to be a swimmer! We meet at Better Energise Pool on Cornlands Road, Acomb every Monday (apart from Bank Holidays) from 1.30 to 2.30pm. The gentle exercises take place in the shallow end, where we have lots of fun whilst contributing to our general fitness. There is a time at the beginning and end of the sessions for a swim for those who enjoy swimming. The cost is £25 for 8 sessions.

Many of us go to the cafe afterwards for a hot drink and "get together". We are a gregarious group, who, like all u3a groups, have made many lasting friendships during our time with the Water Fitness Group.

We also meet for lunches, the last one being in April at the York College restaurant, where we enjoyed a delicious meal.

If you are interested in joining, please contact;

Anne Fox (Group Leader) email anne25fox@gmail.com

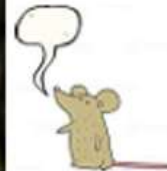
Sue Tompkin (Secretary) email sunic911@gmail.com

Tel 07894831756

Sue Tompkin

Picture Word Quiz

Meals and dishes we all enjoy



Answers on page 15

With thanks to Nick Tompkin

Travel Team Report

Day Trips in March, April, and May

March

After some delay due to traffic congestion in York, our March day-trip made for Lincoln and a very interesting day out. We had tickets for the Castle where an outstanding



feature was seeing one of the only four remaining original copies of The Magna Carta. Several members commented on how they appreciated the informative film “Magna Carta Story”. Some people visited the cathedral; others ventured down the hill into Lincoln town. A pleasant surprise was seeing the Red Arrows flying overhead.

April



In April we visited Halifax. Most of the group visited Shibden Hall first of all to see where the TV series of “Gentleman Jack” was filmed and discover details of the amazing life of Anne Lister whose diaries provided the data on which the series was built. Everyone

spent some time at Bankfield Museum, where the “Extreme Fashions” exhibition was a source of much interest.

After free time for lunch in the town centre, we had a fascinating tour of the Piece Hall. Our guides were full of details about how the Hall was developed in the eighteenth century for the cloth trade and then, after being repurposed several times, was reinvented by Calderdale Council as a location for shops, cafes, a museum and an attractive outside space for music and other events.



May

Our May trip was focussed on Wensleydale, and we started by visiting the Brymor ice cream parlour. Despite it being a chilly day, many of us sampled the fabulous ice cream for which Brymor is known. Others indulged in lovely scones and tea or coffee. From there we drove to Hawes where everyone spent some time in the village or in the Dales Countryside Museum. We were split in two groups for the very interesting cheese-making demonstration at the Wensleydale Creamery. Around that, we had lunch either in the creamery's café or in the village itself. Most of us enjoyed tasting the various cheeses and bought whatever tasted best to our palate.



Sheila McKilligan
travelteamyorku3a@gmail.com

u3a York Trip to Sardinia May 2026

It was goodbye to grey skies as we arrived at Olbia in the Northeast of Sardinia to warm, sunny weather to be met by Pauline, our tour manager and our coach driver who took us to Cannigione and our first hotel.

After breakfast next day we were off through some of the beautiful small villages of the Costa Smeralda to Porto Cervo, an exclusive seaside area and then continued further up the coast for a coffee stop at another beautiful bay where the opulence was less overwhelming.



Next day we were off to France! With an early start to the port of Santa Teresa di Gallura we took the ferry across the Strait to Bonifacio at the southern tip of Corsica. After immigration and a short walk, we were in the beautiful old town with cobbled, narrow streets, old buildings a distinctly French flavour. After a guided tour we enjoyed spectacular coastal views from its walls before a stroll back to the quayside for the return ferry.

Our visit next day was inland to the cork growing region of Sardinia and the Cork Museum to learn about traditional growing, harvesting and processing of this remarkable natural material.

We travelled next via Castelsardo to Alghero on the northwest coast to our second hotel and later enjoyed a traditional Sardinian evening dinner in a family-run Agriturismo where we dined on fresh produce in a lovely old farm building.

After a morning tour of the lovely old town of Alghero with its narrow, winding streets and alleyways and some seriously forbidding city walls we left for Capo Caccia and a family-owned wine and olive oil estate in the area renowned for Cannonau and Vermentino wines. Our guide was the owner of what she described as a boutique winery being positioned between two much larger vineyards. Naturally there was tasting of her delicious wines and olives with appropriate cheeses.

Next day was free time and after a day of wandering around, having coffee and snacks, reading books and taking a swim we were ready for another day.

After breakfast we drove through the lush green Valley of the Nuraghe where the landscape is dotted with tall, (about 20m), conical dry stone block towers. Thanks to our excellent guide we learned that they were built about 1600 BC by the Nuraghic civilisation and are thought to be dwellings, food stores and defences. The one we



visited was the Nuraghe of Santu Antine which consisted of a high central tower surrounded by three bastions.

After yet another delicious lunch we took a short tour of the picturesque town of Bosa on the Temu river and its 12th century cathedral and then it was back to our hotel for the last time.



Our tour manager and coach driver were much appreciated, but it is truly not possible to finish without thanking Sheila, our group leader, for this tour and for the many others she has organised over the years.

Brian and Yvonne Gill

Quiz Answers

Meals and dishes we all enjoy

1. Fish and Chips.
2. Scotch Egg.
3. Eton Mess.
4. Beef Wellington.
5. Parkin.
6. Spotted Dick.
7. Bubble and Squeak.
8. Cottage Pie.
9. Bangers and Mash.
10. Sunday Roast.

Members Round-up

Life After Retirement

I retired from nursing at the age of 55. In those days, it was encouraged and was a real bonus when you had grandchildren coming along.

In 1989, the York branch of the University of the 3rd Age was founded. It interested me, and although I can't remember the exact year that I joined, it must have been in the early years.

I met some lovely people over the years I was a member, and one of my favourite groups was that of the English Folk Dancing Group. A good crowd of us would meet regularly at the Homestead Park, where we used their hall for our dancing. When this



was no longer possible, we went on to use the Parish Hall of St Joseph's Church in Burdyke Avenue. I can't remember the names of the husband-and-wife team who were the excellent leaders of the group. It was a lively and much enjoyed group of members, and pretty good dancers, if I remember rightly! I am still in touch with Ann Senior, who, with her late husband Barry, were keen members. Ann recently had a lovely celebration party to mark her 90th birthday, and having moved to Tadcaster is now a member of the u3a group there.

I also studied English literature with a small group who met together in Bootham, at the home of its leader. I can also remember painting and drawing at Connaught Court with another group, once again, most enjoyable. I also remember going on some lovely coach trips, always of great interest.

I discontinued my membership when my husband retired. I was very reluctant to give up my membership number, which was low and rather special to me, but it was time to take advantage of retirement together. By this time, we had 2 young granddaughters, a delight to spend time with, both then and to this day, when they have children of their own.

After my husband died 6 years ago, I felt that I lacked grown up conversation with like-minded people, and so I rejoined the u3a nearly 2 years ago.

It was one of the best decisions that I could ever have made, widening my love and knowledge of Astronomy, Poetry, Memoire and learning from the interesting talks which are held regularly. Most importantly I have made much valued new friends.

Thank you u3a and especially to those who give so much of their time volunteering and running the groups.

Eileen Gray

Celebration of a Life – Anna Baldwin

Anna Baldwin, who sadly passed away on 17th April, was a truly remarkable woman. Despite the challenges of ill-health and the loss of her eyesight, she lived a full and rich life, making a lasting contribution to the many groups and organisations she supported, including those with sight loss and neurodiversity as well as contributing significantly to York u3a.

After retirement Anna and her husband Tom joined York u3a in 2015. Anna energetically and enthusiastically assisted in introducing and organising new ideas for improving the experience of members. Working with the previous organiser, Peter Jarman, Anna arranged for the Saturday Talks to be held in the Central Methodist Church Hall, a much larger venue to allow a wider audience. She and Peter took turns to find suitable speakers – often distinguished local experts. They also arranged for the talks to be recorded and made available to u3a members who could not get to the CMC. After Peter stepped down from this role, Anna persuaded Liz Swinbank to take his place, and the two of them organised the talks until last year. The last talk Anna organised was that by her friend Terri Apter, about the pleasures and difficulties of being a grandparent. Anna also started the “Saturday Socials” – an opportunity for members to gather in a more informal setting to either play board games or enjoy engaging talks on a wide range of topics. While a committee member for York u3a Anna initiated the annual Open Day, to spread the word about the opportunities afforded to the membership of u3a to the wider community. All these initiatives continue and are thriving.

Anna loyally continued leading the Exploring the Poets Group right up until the time of her death, with her usual grace and dignity despite the difficulties. As Group Leader she led the group with her seemingly endless knowledge of the English poets, and with her boundless enthusiasm for her subject, but she led unobtrusively. The choice of poets was made by the group: and far from dominating the group with her expertise, she constantly sought and encouraged the opinions of members of the group, always seeing something valuable in whatever view they took. The sessions were always rewarding for the members – and it was a bonus that Anna clearly found them as rewarding as everyone else.

Anna's warmth and concern for other Visually Impaired people to learn how using Apple iPhones and iPads, which would be a huge benefit to them, led her to start up Accessible Apple Tech sessions. These ran for a few years at MySight and various cafes in York up until lockdown. Any Visually Impaired Person that Anna met she invited to join the group. The group, led by Anna, agreed to continue online during COVID which was a lifeline to all the members.

In mid-2023 it was decided to start a York u3a Accessible Apple Tech Group with Anna as Group Leader and Harry Bell as the IT expert, and all the then, current members.

As well as the existing group we were now able to reach out to any Visually Impaired members of York u3a to help them use all the

wonderful free technology that is available to help the Visually Impaired community.

Anna was indeed an inspiration to all of us, even having an eye removed did not stop her bouncing back, right up to the end, organising us all for the Group meetings and even lunch after where we all got to know each other better – which was wonderful!

She is sorely missed by all the Accessible Apple Tech Group and the York and North Yorkshire Visually Impaired Community.

Anna had a rare quality of sensing what needed to be done, and being able to persuade others to support her in making it happen, firmly but always with grace and good humour. Anna was highly intelligent, had a wonderful wry sense of humour, great compassion and empathy, and was always fun to be with. She will be hugely missed by all those whose lives she touched, and we extend our sincere condolences to Tom and her family.

Beryl Oppenheim, Toby Bainton, Harry Bell & Lesley Robinson

