

What's on u3a York September 2026

Welcome to the September edition of u3a York "What's On".

We hope you have had a wonderful summer and managed to see the partial solar eclipse that happened on August 12th.

The email this month is full of things for you to do or join. Clicking on the highlighted link should send you to our website, and more information.

Please look at the opportunities to join new or existing groups, travel with our travel group, and attend our Saturday talks and socials. There is also an important message from our Chair regarding volunteer opportunities.

Just a reminder, if you haven't renewed already, u3a York membership renewals are due.

Please do read the email all the way through and respond where relevant as noted in the email, or if you do not have access to email, please contact the Office on 01904289293. Please DO NOT respond to this email as responses will not be monitored.

If you need to alert the membership to a relevant opportunity or event, please contact eventsleadyorku3a@gmail.com, or if it relates to a new or changing group get in touch via yorku3agroups@gmail.com. Any communication for the next month's email must be received at least seven days before the end of the month. The "What's on" team will contact you to let you know whether we are able to include your piece or to suggest a different method of communication.

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GROUPS NEWS

#12009 – [Astronomy for Everyone](#)

A beginner's introduction to astronomy, meeting at the Friends Meeting House.

3rd Wednesday of the month at 10am – first session September 16th.

If you've ever wondered why the sky is blue or what is a black hole – this group is for you.

We'll discover the wonders of the Universe and find our way around the night sky.

No previous astronomical knowledge is required – just an interest in the Universe!

Duplicate Bridge (#11403 Tuesday, #1411 Thursday)

U3A duplicate bridge groups held on Tuesdays and Thursdays are looking for new regular players.

We are relaxed social groups that meet Tuesdays and Thursdays at Edward the confessor church hall on Tadcaster Road in the afternoon. Knowledge of playing duplicate bridge is required.

The cost is £5 per session which includes a drink and biscuit. If you would like to come along for a taster session. If you have a partner great but if not don't worry, we can usually find a partner for single players.

Contact Jo Norman at jonorman48@gmail.com for the Tuesday session.

Contact Lorraine Hawley at lorraine.hawley@gmail.com for the Thursday session.

#12053 – Gigs & Concerts

Jo is planning another concert (after the success of its last gig) on Sunday 29th November. Join the group to be the first to know the details, plus the opportunity to buy tickets at the early bird price once released.

#11501 – Early Days of Cinema

Having screened a variety of quite different films since last Autumn (Marx Brothers, Hitchcock, René Clair) we will now take another look at favourites from past years. Thanks to group convenors, we now have access to many good quality DVDs of early films, and although starting at the turn of the last century, we now go up to 1949. Membership of the group has evolved, and these will be a first viewing for many, but importantly, these films are so good, they repay watching more than once.

One of the great pleasures of this exploration is that there is an Aladdin's cave of extant movies, many of which have not been seen for decades. The emphasis is on comedy, fiction and drama, with two films in one session if time allows. Each screening is followed by a short discussion.

3rd Monday of each month at FMH. Starts September 2026. Come and join us!

Apply to: [Ian Watson](#)

New Group: Let's Talk About Death

Group leader: Pegger Sellers

I'm looking for expressions of interest in a starting a new group to talk about death.

It's a big topic and could cover areas relating to the physical, practical, psychological, spiritual or anything else that's relevant. At the first meeting group members could share their topics of

interest and, collectively, we'd agree on which ones we'd schedule for discussion in future sessions. Although grief could be one of the topics, it's important to note that this is not intended as a space for grieving.

As group leader I would take responsibility for facilitating the discussions. I envisage an upper limit of around eight members and with it being a closed group; meaning it would have a set number of sessions, and no new members would be admitted after the start.

Where: The group would meet in an available room in central York.

How long: Two-hour sessions for up to 8 consecutive weeks.

When: Meetings on a weekday, during the day.

Cost: Room cost to be split between members and paid in advance

Please email me peggy.sellers@outlook.com to confirm your interest or arrange for a chat about what to expect.

Other Groups with Spaces

#12025 – [Beginners Guitar](#)

#12064 – [Intermediate ukulele & singing](#)

#12058 – [Mental Health Awareness, short course](#)

#11612 – [Sign Language Beginners](#)

#11611 – [Sign Language Continuers](#)

SATURDAY TALKS AND SOCIALS

Talk: King Cotton: social and family history in the textile industry

12th September 2026 Central Methodist Hall 10.30 –11.30am (Tea/coffee available from 9.45am)

Speaker: Roger Backhouse

Cotton was a classic boom to bust industry. Once employing hundreds of thousands of people it has now almost vanished from Britain. Three generations of Roger's family worked in the cotton industry including his grandfather, a cotton mill engineer. Roger will talk about cotton's remarkable history and social impact, particularly in Lancashire.

Last year Roger gave York u3a a fascinating talk on railway posters. He plans to end this talk on a cheerful note, so please be prepared to sing as you leave.

The talk will be available live via zoom and the recording will be made available following the talk. Watch out for zoom details in forthcoming emails.

There is no admission charge for members, but we ask for a voluntary donation from guests.

No need to reserve spaces to attend in person.

Talk: Rhyme and Reason – the real reasons for ‘nursery’ rhymes

26th September 2026 10am – 12pm Penn Room, Friends Meeting House

Speaker: Susan Ackroyd

Susan Ackroyd was born and brought up in New South Wales. She has had a varied and fascinating career, ranging from being a seaman on a passage to Europe, a schoolteacher and principal, and attaining a law degree. Susan and her husband retired to the Blue Mountains where some ten years ago she decided to research the political satire we now know as nursery rhymes. The first edition of her book, *Rhyme and Reason*, was published in 2023.

Her presentation will delve into what ‘nursery’ rhymes tell us about the politics, economy, society, and religion of England from the 1200s to the 1700s?

Who was the frog courting the mouse? What was Mother Hubbard looking for? It wasn’t a bone. Why were the blind mice being persecuted? And why was a baby on a treetop?

The 26 rhymes in the book are political satire, disguised so retribution would not fall on the speaker.

This promises to be a most entertaining and engaging talk, and we do hope as many of you as possible will be able to attend. As spaces for the Socials are always limited, please watch out for the email and send in your booking.

There is no cost to attend.

Talk: 1225 and All That – A History of York Minster.

3 October 2026 10am – 12pm Penn Room, Friends Meeting House

Speaker: Rob Stay

This one-off talk is taking place to celebrate the York 50+ Festival and immediately following the talk we will walk together to take part in the festival “Grand Parade” which will start from York Theatre Royal. More information about the parade to follow in coming weeks.

There has been a minster in York for about fourteen centuries. In his talk Rob Stay will briefly give an account of that long history and describe various features of the building. His qualifications for doing this rest primarily on what he has learned since becoming a Minster Guide in 2013.

At a personal level, Rob grew up in Bristol and Somerset and came to York in 1972 to study philosophy at the university. He has a deep love for medieval churches, be they big or small and according to him, they don’t come any bigger than York Minster and only rarely much better. This has encouraged him to study the Minster beyond the strict needs of giving a guided tour.

This is bound to be an extremely popular talk so do keep an eye out for the email and follow the instructions to reserve a place.

There is no cost to attend.

TRAVEL NEWS

Travel UK

The next trip now open for applications is to Manchester: Museums and Markets on Wednesday 18th November, at a cost of £15.25.

Drop off will be at the People's History Museum (PHM). It is also a short walk to the Science and Industry Museum and the John Rylands Library. The Christmas market should be open in Albert Square, where many Christmas market attractions are congregated, a ten-minute walk away. Here are links to the [FULL DETAILS](#) and [ONLINE BOOKING FORM](#).

We still have the option to take more shared room bookings for the 5-day trip to Scotland on 5th May 2027. All single occupancy rooms are fully booked. Go to the [travel webpage](#) for more details.

Travel Abroad

The newly formed travel abroad team has arranged a trip with Riviera Travel for September 21st to 1st October 2027 as 'Grand Tour of Slovenia & Italy's Friuli Region'. If you are interested contact us for more information as there is still availability for the trip.

If you want to stay connected to our plans and hear about all upcoming trips, please navigate to [Travel Abroad](#) for more information about the group.

If you decide to join, please send your details via the webpage link to the group leader. You will then receive an acknowledgement to confirm you have been added to the group list and when trips are organised you will receive the information.

VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES

"What's On" publishing volunteer

Are you efficient, organised and dependable?

We need you to help our team by summarising the monthly timetable of what's happening in u3a York from emails from members.

It won't take long and will help so many by giving them ideas of new things to do and new places to go every month. You could really help people to get out and about. Feel free to talk to me about what it would consist of... you'll be part of our team and make lots of new friends.

We need someone to start early September so that the “What’ On” can continue without interruption. Just email me, Karen Sawyer at chair@u3ayork.org.uk to arrange a no commitment chat.

Events and Volunteering Assistant

We are looking for expressions of interest for an Events and Volunteering Assistant to support and deputise where necessary for the Events Lead.

The role would involve working closely with the Events team and refreshment volunteers, helping to plan, organise and host a range of regular and one-off events, with a particular focus on Saturday Socials and New Members Meetings.

If you enjoy working in a supportive team and meeting and interacting with new people, then this is the role for you!

For more information, please contact eventsleadYorku3a@gmail.com