

August 2026

SCUNTHORPE AND DISTRICT U3A NEWSLETTER

<https://scunthorpe.u3asite.uk>

The cut-off date for
contributions to the
September newsletter is
Wednesday 16th
September.

Contributions as always to:
newseditor@scunthorpeu3a.org

Chair's Comments – Eleanor Wasley

The committee had a month off in August with no meeting. We are now looking forward to September. Even though it is a very long time since any of us were controlled by school terms (unless we have grandchildren of school age), September still has the feel of a new start. We may not have new uniform, shoes and school haircut, but there is plenty to occupy us. Rooms and speakers have been booked for the next year and we have the December meeting to finalise and look forward to.

We are looking for new committee members (trustees). Several longstanding members have to stand down at the next AGM and will need to be replaced.

It's not an onerous task as we meet once a month to plan future events and the smooth running of the u3a. Meetings are informal and friendly. We cover a lot of ground but have time to laugh too.

If you think you might be interested, come along as an observer to find out what is involved with a view to being co-opted.

The Yorkshire and Humberside Region is holding a workshop in September which is free and open to anyone who may be interested in becoming a trustee. There is more information on page 2.

Please do seriously think about this and become more involved in the running of our u3a. We can't function without a committee and people who are prepared to take on the job of chair, treasurer or secretary.

Come and talk to me, or any members of the committee for more information. There is a place for everyone!

Getting involved.

Do you enjoy being a member of Scunthorpe u3a?

Would you miss it, if it wasn't there?

If the answer is yes to either of these, do you realise the only way we can continue to run is by people stepping forward and volunteering to help us. In the famous words of the Tesco slogan "every little helps", from helping in the kitchen or with the tech team, to joining the committee.

Wait a minute - the Committee? What does that involve? I can't do that. That's not for me...

Actually, you can!

Yorkshire and Humber Region are running a workshop (see the flier) explaining in simple terms what it means to join the committee and become a trustee. As well as existing trustees, it is designed for those who have toyed with the idea but have yet to 'take the plunge'.

It will explain the role of a trustee and why it is important, as well as answering any questions. There is a lunch provided as well as opportunity to talk to members from other u3as across the region. As Neil Clarke, secretary for YAHHR explains

"Without people wanting to be trustees we don't have volunteers to run our u3as."

What he doesn't go on to say is that without trustees and a committee, we don't have a u3a... AND none of us wants that!

Talk to any of the committee and think about coming to a committee meeting as an observer, with a view to joining us.

Sign up to attend the workshop - full details here.

<https://yahru3a.uk/2026-09-yahr-workshop/> In the words of Richard Branson "Life is a helluva lot more fun if you say yes rather than no"



Trustee Workshop

September 22nd 2026

10:00 for a 10:30 start, ending at 15:00, lunch is included

No registration fee.

Venue: St George's Centre, Great George Street, LEEDS, LS1 3DL

Being a trustee is an essential part of being a u3a committee member. This workshop will explore the role of a trustee with the objective of demystifying it and answering questions you may have.

The event is aimed at those who are currently trustees and those who are thinking about taking on a committee role as a trustee. Therefore, please tell your entire u3a membership about this workshop.

This is open to all u3a members in the Yorkshire and Humber Region.

Please register through our website at

<https://yahru3a.uk/2026-09-yahr-workshop/>

Speaker Review – Judith Proctor

Joy Wood from Cleethorpes was the guest speaker for the u3a July meeting. Her talk was entitled “From Bedpan to Pen”. Joy was guided and enthused by her Father’s mantra, “Work hard and you will be successful, be the best nurse you can be, listen and learn. Turn up, shut up or if in doubt make it up”. He encouraged her to be a “Rolls Royce Nurse”. Joy talked about her journey as a nurse and also about her writing career. She felt she had had a wonderful career in the NHS starting in 1977 training in the Harlow Wood Orthopaedic Hospital at Nottingham and then onto general nursing training at Sheffield. The wards were the more traditional nightingale ones with a Matron. After 2 years Joy took a written examination and an oral examination. During her nursing career she also went back to Cleethorpes to nurse her mother.



At the age of 40 her nursing career took a turn, and she worked in Public Health as a school nurse during school term times. She made presentations to schools and moved on to take a teaching course at Hull gaining counselling skills. Her next venture was to set up a clinic in Lincoln for contraception, then moving onto a teenage clinic after a course in sex and relationships at Sleaford. She then took a Team Leader course at Hull University which enabled her to get a job in the Children’s Family Services in Lincolnshire. During this time, she undertook a degree course at Sheffield Hallam University. She worked more in the administrative side at this point in her nursing career and she was offered redundancy which was the catalyst for her to become a writer. Her first book’s working title was “Iron Fist in a Velvet Glove” and took a year to write. She found an editor online who checked after 3 chapters how things were going, who advised a change of title as the book was about twins to “For the love of Emily”. She was advised to spice the book up a bit. It cost £700 to complete. To promote her self-published book Joy had articles in the local gazette and book signings in a café in Keelby and in Waterstones and the House of Fraser. She started giving presentations to raise her profile. The book that “put her on the map” was “Hospital Murder” which was featured in the Wetherspoon’s magazine. Joy was subsequently nominated for an award in the Romantic Novelist genre.

Those wanting to know more about Joy should read “Dead Pretty” her book based on herself. Joy concluded by reading out a poignant poem which had been discovered in an old lady’s locker at the hospital.

Speaker Secretary – Pat Ackland

Future Speakers

28th August, Tony Perkins, “A Medieval Pilgrimage”

A pilgrimage was not possible for everyone and for those who did go it was often a once in a lifetime event. I speak on the who? What sort of people would go on pilgrimage?

The where? What destinations were open to a medieval pilgrim?

The why? What prompted people to make often quite hazardous journeys?

The how? What methods would be used to reach their Holy destination?

I demonstrate the clothes of the period and items often carried by a pilgrim.

25th September, Malcolm Johnson, “The Headscarf Heroes”.

Hull 1968 - the triple trawler disaster and the fight of "The Headscarf Heroes"

23rd October, Horace Liberty, “London Statues”.

An illustrated talk about the sometime funny stories behind well-known public sculptures in London.

27th November, “The Sealed Knot Society”.

Members of this Civil war group will demonstrate some of the weapons used and tell us a bit of the history of the Civil war.

11th December, Catherine Terry, “A Life Treading the Boards”.

An Autobiographical Presentation of Life in Showbiz! All you every wanted to know about Showbusiness... and some of the things you didn't want to know too! Hear about the glitz, the glamour, and the realities, and spot the famous faces of Showbiz Royalty. From BBC Sitcoms to Shakespeare, West End Musicals, TV film sets to Cruises, we take a highly entertaining journey through Catherine's showbiz career, as she draws us into her world of Theatre and TV. Accompanied by photographs, video footage and anecdotes, this truly is a 'A Life Treading the Boards'.

Can you help?

We need some more helpers in the welcome team and also the kitchen.

If you would like to join either team, please can you talk to

Jenny B (Welcome) or

June (Kitchen) at a monthly meeting.

Alternatively get in touch with Eleanor, either at a monthly meeting or by email.

U3A TRIP TO PIECE HALL HALIFAX CHRISTMAS MARKET

DATE Sunday 29th November

COST £10

Morrison's 09.00hrs

DFS Brigg 09.15

Coach Home 16.30hrs

Visit Piece Hall Christmas Market. Over fifty stalls showcasing some of the region's favourite independent producers and artisan makers. They will feature a wide range of unique stalls with everything from homeware to jewellery, gifts and delicious food to eat now or take home. Entertainment will include a vintage carousel and a gigantic Christmas tree.

Members only allowed on the coach trip with the exception see below. This has been taken from the u3a national website under "insurance".

If a u3a member needs to bring a carer/companion when attending u3a activities/events. Is this permissible under our insurance cover?

Yes, it is, providing the carer/companion does not attend any u3a activities as an individual and committee approval has been given. Should a member not be able to participate independently in u3a activities a carer/companion is essential as it is not acceptable for insurance reasons for the responsibility for care to be left to fellow members unless there are specific arrangements in place with an individual member who may well be a friend.

If a member requires a professional carer they will be covered by their own insurance and not by u3a.

Recycle

Recycling boxes are still available in the small Hall for you to deposit any unwanted electronic cables, phone chargers, spent batteries etc.

Around the Groups

Archery / Air Rifle Shooting – Chris Farrow

We are still not sure when Trackside Archery will be closing down. However, archery sessions will continue for the foreseeable future. I am currently investigating other archery clubs and will keep you informed via this newsletter.

Next session will be Thursday 10th September 11am until 1pm.

Chris Farrow

Beginners' Family History – Kath Allen

The group continues to meet at the Bowls Club on the first Tuesday of each month. There is plenty of room for anyone who would like to join us. Part of each session is usually spent looking at a specific problem that a member brings along.

Please contact Kath Allen if you would like to join us.

Book Group – Sonia Czabaniuk

Another meeting of our intrepid readers took place in July. Strangely, most of the missing members had names with the initial 'J'. If I were an author (which I am certainly not), I could make a whole mystery novel out of that...

Anyway, thoughts on the book chosen at the last meeting – The Gran Tour by Ben Aitken. This was part travelogue and part observational ramblings. The book covers six coach holidays in various places across the UK and Italy with the usual mix of travellers (average age 70+) and Ben (32). Most of the group, on one level or another, enjoyed the book, but, in the end, found it annoying. The 'blurb' raised the expectation of gaining insights into the generational differences, but did not deliver. The descriptions of the places visited were well done. However, Ben did not seem to spend much actual time with the others and so was not able to give us any original thoughts. An easy read.

So what else are the group up to? As usual, the reading covered the whole gamut of literary genres from science (Quantum Theory Cannot Hurt You – Marcus Chown) to easy reading (By My Side – Ruth Jones) via classics and new fiction.

The book for this month was chosen by Tricia and is 'Tell Me Everything' by Elizabeth Strout.

Next meeting – Thursday 27th August 2026, 10.30 at The Arc. (Sorry folks – still full)

A bit better than Beginners' French – Pat Ackland

We have retitled the Beginners' French group to 'A bit better than beginners' French group.

As this group has been together for some time, we have progressed from raw beginners to people with some knowledge of the basics and the ability to make sentences, quite an achievement! Most of the members learnt French at school and thought they had forgotten everything but we're getting it back. It is a well-known fact that learning a language is very good for your mental well-being. This group is welcoming and very friendly so why not give it a go?

The next meeting is on Monday 21st September 10am at Scawby Village Hall.

If you are interested, please contact Pat Ackland.

Card & Board Games Group – Rosemary Barratt

The group have continued to meet each week despite the recent heat. Since the group initially met, it has moved venue a few times. It began in Cafe Indie, then moved to Oasis Cafe. From there the group moved to The Anchor, Beefeater and now it is settled at the Bowls Club, where we meet every Thursday from 1pm to 3pm.

For quite some time the group membership has been full. However, due to a few members no longer able to attend the meetings, we are able to welcome some new members. If you enjoy a friendly game of cards and would like to join us, please get in contact via the u3a website.

Rosemary Barratt, Convenor

Coffee and Chat – Margaret Lambert

Our next meeting will be at the Angel Hotel Brigg on the 11th September 10-30am. If you are feeling lonely come along, you will be made very welcome and you will meet someone to talk too, we shall then meet again on the -

9th Oct. Wetherspoons, Blue Bell, Scunthorpe
13th Nov. Wetherspoons, White Horse, Brigg
11th Dec 20/21 Visual Arts Centre, Scunthorpe

Contact is Margaret Lambert.

Craft Group – Sandra Kirkby

The next Craft Group meeting will be on Wednesday 9th September at the Bowls Club off Lloyds Avenue from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Members bring whatever craft activities they are currently working on. New members will be made very welcome.

Sandra Kirkby.

History Group - Pat Ackland

This month was the turn of James II, one of our shorter reigning monarchs. He was a contradictory person with many good qualities but unfortunately this didn't include those of kingship. He was probably a very capable 'spare'.

After the Civil War, James spent time in exile, mainly in France. This very much influenced his Catholic beliefs and distrust of a Protestant led government, ultimately leading to his downfall.

As Duke of York, he proved to be an effective organiser and administrator. He was appointed Lord High Admiral and James completely reorganised and improved the operational efficiency of the Royal Navy, turning it into a professional fighting force. He successfully commanded the fleet in the Anglo Dutch wars. He initiated formal training and exams, introduced strict rules to reduce corruption and also steady pay. He also persuaded Parliament to fund a ship building programme.

He successfully led the firefighting efforts during the Great Fire of London in 1666, by organising firefighting brigades and creating fire breaks by demolishing houses in line of the fire. He used the Royal Guard to prevent looting and quell public panic.

James converted to Catholicism in 1669 and there had been unsuccessful attempts to exclude him from the throne. He was on a collision course with Parliament. He distrusted the Protestant Establishment and one of his first act as monarch was to try to suspend the Penal Laws which excluded Roman Catholics from public office and the military and also the Test Acts that required office holders to reject Catholic doctrines.

Parliament objected, so he dissolved Parliament. He appointed many Catholics to prominent positions in the military, judiciary and academic posts, making him even more unpopular.

He issued a Declaration of Indulgence, and insisted this be read by all Anglican clergy from their pulpit. Seven Bishops refused to do this and were sent to the Tower of London for 'seditious libel.'

Things were brought to a head by the birth of his son (although there were rumours he was a 'substitute' smuggled in to the queen's bed in a warming pan...) so dashing any hopes the crown would pass to James's protestant daughter, Mary.

The seven bishops were acquitted to much rejoicing, which effectively destroyed the king's authority.

On the same day, seven prominent politicians sent a letter of invitation to William of Orange asking him to intervene to save both Church and State. James fled to France, throwing the Great Seal of England into the River Thames. Parliament declared his flight constituted an abdication of the throne.

Local History - Eleanor Wasley

It was a bumper turnout for the July meeting when 26 of us went to St Andrew's Church, Redbourne. This is no longer used and is in the care of the Churches Conservation Trust.

We were met by one of their volunteers, Mary, who talked about the history of the church and its links to the Dukes of St Albans (descended from the illegitimate son of Charles II and Nell Gwyn.) Their memorials and hatchments are on the walls of the chancel. There is also the grave slab of Sir Gerald Sothill who died in 1410 and was Lord of the Manor as well as Sheriff of Lincolnshire and a justice of the peace.



The highlight of the visit was the wonderful Georgian enamelled east window dating from 1830. It is a rare survivor as most of them were destroyed by the Victorians in their zeal to return to the more traditional medieval stained-glass look.

The window is stunning and the lack of supporting lead network of supports makes it look more like a painting than glass window. It depicts the Opening of the Sixth Seal on the Day of Judgement from the Book of Revelation, marking the arrival of the "Great Day of God's Wrath".

Along the walls of the nave are more enamelled glass windows depicting the apostles.

Surprisingly the church doesn't feature in Simon Jenkin's 'England's Thousand Best Churches' but that doesn't mean it is not worth finding. (Perhaps Simon Jenkins didn't find it?)

Next time, instead of bypassing Redbourne, call in and have a look at the church – it is worth it!

iPad and Tablet group – David Holmes

Our next meeting is on Tuesday 8th September 2026, time 10am to 12pm at Oasis Community Space Cafe, Ferry Road, Scunthorpe, DN15 8LG.

New members are most welcome to join our group to discover how their iPad, Tablet, Smartphone and Laptop work and have fun doing it. Let us help you to sort out any problems you may have with your Digital Devices or problems understanding how the internet works on these devices.

If you cannot make it to this meeting, please let me know.

David Holmes, Group Leader.

Lunch Group – Ann Owen

SCUNTHORPE u3a BLUE LUNCHEON GROUP

Our next venue will be at

THE GAMEKEEPER
in SCOTTER DN21 3TW

Wednesday 23rd September 2026

Eating at 12.30pm.

The menu to follow on our WhatsApp group.

Red lunch group - Cheryl Hassall

Our next lunch will be on Monday 21st September, 12.30 for 1.00 at The Red Lion, Redbourne.

In October we will start the rolling programme, so we will have our lunch on a Tuesday, November will be a Wednesday etc. Hopefully that way everyone in the group will get a chance to attend some if not all of the lunches.

Murder Mystery Group – Wendy England

Eleven of us met to solve another murder mystery. It was “The Last Stop” again which had originally been written with two different endings - and we had solved one of these earlier in the year.

The setting is an isolated station in the depths of rural England on a cold, windy and rainy evening. Passengers are getting increasingly grumpy as they wait for the last train that is delayed. Then a body is found lying motionless on the tracks. He was an unsavoury character and all of the passengers had reasons for wanting him dead.

It came down to a choice of two. Unfortunately, recollections varied as to who we had decided was the culprit last time and who could have done it this time...

All good fun. Come along and join us. Next meeting Saturday 19th September 2pm until 4pm.

Qi Gong – Mel Ogden

The Qi Gong group will be starting again in September.

If you are interested in starting in this group (or indeed, restarting) could you please email me.

Quiz Group – Andrew Bullen

It was a bumper turn out again for the September quiz. As well as the usual general knowledge rounds, there were rounds featuring August, Summer and water (a topical subject). The current affairs round soon showed up those who don't read or listen to the news as carefully as others! All good fun as we don't take scoring seriously and it exercises those 'little grey cells'... The home-made cakes and bacon butties from the Thursday morning cafe in the church hall are a definite bonus too.

The next meeting will be on Thursday 3rd September 10am to 12noon at St. Paul's small hall.

Rummikub – David Holmes

Our next 2 meetings are the Tuesday 1st and 15th September 2026, time 10am to 12pm, at Oasis Community Space Cafe, Avenue Vivian, Scunthorpe. DN15 8LG.

This a joint group with North Lindsey and Scunthorpe members and will be running every 2 weeks on week 1 and week 3. If you have a Rummikub set, please bring it along.

New members are most welcome to join us and have fun. If you have not played it before we can teach you.

If you cannot make it to these meetings, please let me know.

Science and Technology Group – Alan Keen

Following on from last month when we talked about developments in farming, Eleanor came with information about a startup company that is pioneering a breakthrough water filtration system to remove harmful phosphates from waterways, offering an alternative to conventional systems. A patented sponge like organic substance is submerged in water. As the water flows through it, it absorbs the phosphates which can later be removed and recycled as fertiliser. It doesn't require any power and operates continuously.

Alan K talked about the problems of alien species in the Florida Everglades and the detrimental effect they have on the environment and native species. In particular he referred to Burmese pythons which were very popular as pets, with over 17,000 introduced into the USA between 1970-95. They can grow up to 20 ft long and got 'dumped' by their owners. There are now thought to be between 100,000-300,000 living in the Everglades. They reproduce rapidly and have no natural enemies.

They are top predators and the population of native mammals like raccoons, bobcats and opossum have plunged by 85-99%. They carry an invasive Asian lungworm parasite. The Burmese pythons have adapted too living with this. Native snakes have not and it results in their death.

He highlighted problems with other invasive non-native animals and plants.

Carrock came with a completely different topic - Reflect Orbital's plans to provide "sunlight on demand" which they are hoping will revolutionise the energy industry... It involves releasing satellites (1000 by 2028 and 50,000 by 2035.) These will redirect sunlight to the earth's surface during the night.

Among other things, this can be used to power solar panels during darkness, extend farming by providing longer hours of daylight for growing crops, increase working hours in construction industries, assist in search and rescue - and you can also hire the beams for beach parties (all at a cost of course....) It did begin to sound a bit like an April 1st joke.

For a complete bit of fun, he then showed a short video which he described as the 'Thai space project'.

<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/rMn9yU2Q2j8>

Thai's launch rockets during a religious festival called Bun Bang Fai, when the rockets are offered to the god of rain to ensure a plentiful monsoon season and a good rice harvest. The rockets are homemade and there is fierce competition to see who can produce the highest and best smoke trail. This rocket launch was a bit of a disaster. It should have gone like this...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DnxNWDPMuCc>

We finished off with a debate initiated by Alan G on renewable energy. This led on to a debate about rare earths, their availability and costs. China is the main source of these. Processing them causes all sorts of problems and environmental damage. Increasingly countries which have access to rare earth metals are sending them to China for processing... China very much has the monopoly and it generates billions of dollars to its economy.

Sodium batteries are in the news and China is at the forefront of sodium battery development. We discussed the thorny issue of lithium and sodium batteries and the advantages and disadvantages of each.

Sodium is widely available and the batteries are cheaper to produce, have much longer lifespan, retain capacity even in cold weather and are safer as they don't combust if overcharged. Unfortunately, they are a lot larger, heavier and cannot store as much power as lithium. This limits their use as they aren't suitable in things like mobile phones or electric cars.

We have space in the group for new members. You don't need to be a Nobel scientist, just have an enquiring mind. Come along and give it a try!

Next meeting Thursday 17th September at 20-21 Visual Arts Centre 1.30-3.30.

Scrabble Group – Wendy England

The next Scrabble Group meeting will be **Wednesday 2nd September** at the **Malt Shovel** pub in Ashby. If anyone would like to have lunch before attacking the Scrabble board, you will be most welcome to come for **1pm**. Action will begin at **2pm**.

Please come and join our very friendly group and discover some new words – and possibly new friends! This is now a joint group with North Lindsey u3a.

If you have a Scrabble set, please bring it along.

Wendy England.

Singing for fun – Mary Magee

Singing for fun is having July and August off as lots of us are on holiday.

The group is doing really well and we have lots of fun and will start up again on 8th of September at the Scunthorpe Bowls Club.

WhatsApp Group – David Holmes

This group is designed to help members keep in touch and is particularly useful for people to arrange to meet up for coffee, walks etc. If you want your name added to the group, please contact David Holmes by email with your name and telephone number so he can add your name.

Remember you need a smartphone to be able to use this app. Please only download the app from Apple Store or Google play, as other sites may not be secure.