

September 2026

SCUNTHORPE AND DISTRICT U3A NEWSLETTER <https://scunthorpe.u3asite.uk>

The cut-off date for
contributions to the October
newsletter is **Wednesday
14th October.**

Contributions as always to:
newseditor@scunthorpeu3a.org

Chair's Comments – Eleanor Wasley

I recently attended a Chair's Forum on Zoom when the discussion topic was how people get to know about your u3a, what attracts people and how to retain members. There were over a hundred Chairs from across the country representing u3as with memberships of less than 200 to those of several thousands.

All agreed that word of mouth is still the single most effective method, especially as a message can be tailored to the person or group you are talking to. When talking to new members about why they joined, that is definitely the case here. So, a big thank you to all those members who are doing such a good job at publicising our u3a. We know it's great and there are lots of benefits in joining, so keep spreading the word.

Many u3as also mentioned the importance of social media and in particular having a Facebook page to publicise events and activities. I'm very aware we don't make use of social media and it does very much depend on having someone who is confident in posting on social media. ***Is that you?***

If so, we would love to hear from you - come and talk to us at a monthly meeting or contact me. We can keep you supplied with details of talks etc to post.

New members have also said having a range of different interest groups they can join is also important. If you have an interest not already covered, think about starting a group. Many of our groups have started with just a few members and have grown into popular and successful groups. Again, help and support is there to help you.

Qi Gong has restarted this month and is already proving very popular with a lot of new members. David Holmes has been running an iPad and tablet group over the last four years, helping members to get to grips with technology and get the best use from their iPads, tablets and mobile phones. He has done such a good job that numbers have dwindled and the group has now been disbanded. Thank you, David for all your hard work and dedication. Your help and support has been much appreciated by many.

Eleanor

Speaker Review – Eleanor Wasley

At the August meeting, Tony Pearson took us on a Medieval Pilgrimage. He came dressed as a Medieval pilgrim along with some of the possessions he would have taken with him. This included a sturdy staff made of rowan and two small rowan branches tied together with red thread to form a cross. Rowan was believed to possess powerful protection against evil spirits including elves, fairies and bogarts.

Going on pilgrimage was a serious business as the pilgrim had to get permission not only from their bishop to go but also from the king if they were travelling abroad. This proved they were genuine pilgrims.

The pilgrims wore distinctive dress making them immediately identifiable as a pilgrim. This was a woollen tunic over a linen shirt that could be washed. Over this a woollen cloak which protected them against the weather and especially rain. It could also provide a tent-like shelter at night. They wore a broad brimmed hat adorned with distinctive pewter badges bought as souvenirs from shrines and holy places, and worn over a simple linen coif. In cold or wet weather, this would be replaced by a liripipe hood with a long 'tail' that could be wrapped round the neck to secure it. They had a small leather pouch hanging from the belt to carry food or money as well as a small water bottle.

Pilgrims often put mugwort in their shoes which helped prevent tired feet and muscle cramps. Modern research shows this has antiseptic and antifungal properties too!

Many wore 'anti-flea' devices round their necks. These were often little skull shaped containers that could be stuffed with sheep's fleece. A drop of blood and honey was added to the fleece. The fleas were attracted by the smell of blood and then got stuck in the honey. The fleece and fleas could be discarded and replaced by clean fleece. It didn't free the pilgrim of fleas but did probably help control them...

Depending on where they were going, pilgrimages could take months if not years so it was important someone reliable was looking after their property while away. It was also dangerous. Not only were they exposed to the weather, dangerous terrain, wild animals and disease, there was also the threat of pirates and bandits who would ambush them for their money.

So why did they go? There were a variety of reasons from fulfilling a vow to God or a saint at a time of crisis, atonement for sins and to reduce time spent in purgatory or to ask for a miracle or cure, either for themselves or close family. Some just went for adventure and to see and touch revered relics.

Local merchants cashed on to this and sold a variety of small body parts made from wax that could be left at the shrine with prayers for healing... These were then collected and recycled to sell again. Pilgrims could also buy a small mirror in a pouch which they could expose at the shrine and then take home the healing powers.

The sale of 'relics' was also big business. Pilgrims could buy a vial with a drop of the blood of Thomas Becket, part of the arrow shaft that pierced St Edmund, a shoe nail from St George's horse that he rode to kill the dragon. You could even buy a finger bone from St Werburgh. Pilgrimage was also big business for the church who collected large sums of money from the pilgrims.

And another entertaining afternoon.



Speaker Secretary – Pat Ackland

For our meeting on 25th September, I have booked a new speaker for us, Malcolm Johnson, and he will tell us about the Headscarf Heroes from Hull. He will tell us about the ordinary women who fought the Wilson government and forced safety improvements to be implemented in the fishing industry. This talk usually takes around 70 minutes to do it justice.

For our meeting on October 23rd, we welcome back Horace Liberty who greatly entertained us with his talk on Liberty's - the store in London. Horace will give us an illustrated talk about the sometimes, funny stories behind well-known public sculpture in London.

Future Speakers

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.

At the last count only one place was left, please telephone Pam or David for up-to-date information on availability.

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 8th October 11am until 1pm subject to confirmation.

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.

Book Group – Sonia Czabaniuk

Hot drinks delivered, Peter has his cake, so it is time to convene the latest meeting of the book group. First business of the session, a critique of the book chosen at last month's meeting – Tell Me Everything by Elizabeth Strout. This novel is set in the fictional town of Crosby, Maine and brings together various characters from previous books by the author Lucy Barton, Olive Kitteridge etc. The 'Tell Me Everything' in the title are the stories which are woven into the narrative. It was a popular choice for most of the group with only one or two dissenters. A well-written, observation of relationships, friendships and marriage. A strong recommendation.

There is not much to report on the reading habits of the group, summer holidays and family eat into reading time. It seemed to be an opportunity to catch up on earlier recommendations as well as trying out new authors. These ranged from Barbara Erskine, Valley of Ravens, to the follow up to The Miniaturist, The House of Fortune by Jessie Burton.

A total change for the next month, returning to a non-fiction as our choice - Star Spangled Jesus by April Ajoy.

There is no meeting in September and our next meeting is Thursday 29th October at 10.30 at The Arc. (Full group)

NB There will be no book group report in the September Newsletter.

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 19th October 10am at Scawby Village Hall.

If you are interested, please contact Pat Ackland.

Card & Board Games Group – Rosemary Barratt

The group are getting back to full strength following summer holidays. We continue to play Canasta and Chinese Rummy but, for a complete change, recently we played Uno. There was a lot of tactics and some laughter involved.

Interested in joining us? Please contact me through the u3a website.
Rosemary Barratt, Convenor

Coffee and Chat – Margaret Lambert

Our next meeting will be at Wetherspoons, Blue Bell Scunthorpe on the 9th October 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 -

3th 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 14th October 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

Last month, we left the Catholic James II fleeing to France after having thrown the Great Seal of England into the Thames in a fit of pique. Parliament declared this constituted an abdication of the throne and promptly offered it to the Protestant William and Mary - on the condition they signed up to the Declaration of Rights.

This was an important piece of legislation designed to set out the expectations of parliament with regard to the power of the monarch. It limited the power of the monarchy and established parliamentary supremacy as well as setting down basic civil rights including freedom of speech within Parliament, free elections, the right to petition the monarch, and protection from excessive bail, cruel and unusual punishments.

William and Mary are our first and only joint monarchs and their reign marked the start the beginning of a modern constitutional monarchy in Britain.

Things didn't exactly go smoothly. James put pressure on Mary to try and drive a wedge in their marriage. He wanted her to divorce William and convert to Catholicism. When his threats failed, he disowned Mary and placed a father's curse on her. This may in fact have encouraged Mary's determination to foster the advance of the Protestant/Anglican religion.

Jacobite supporters never accepted William and Mary and there was widespread revolt in both Scotland and Ireland in support of James. William's decisive victory at the Battle of the Boyne finally forced James to flee back to France for good. And, of course, there was the Glencoe massacre....

Mary was a well-loved figure and was regarded as a capable monarch. While William focused on military and foreign affairs, Mary managed domestic governance and council meetings. Their combined strengths made their joint rule effective, harmonious and stable.

Mary was also a great supporter of the arts, supporting artists and musicians. Working with Sir Christopher Wren, William and Mary not only reshaped English architecture and garden design, they also influenced interior design, making the collection of Dutch Delftware and Chinese porcelain popular.

Although they may only have had a short reign, their influence can still be seen in the monarchy, parliament and the country today.

Local History - Eleanor Wasley

The August visit was to the Trolleybus museum at Sandtoft. Most trolleybuses were withdrawn from service in the 1960s, although they survived in Bradford until 1972.

Nearly all disused trolleys were sold for scrap and very few were preserved. Sandtoft houses over 50 vehicles and is the largest collection in the world. They also have a few old buses too.



Some of the vehicles have been carefully restored to working condition and run a service around the site on their open days. Others are still awaiting restoration in the sheds. There are several examples from Bradford along with Doncaster and Cleethorpes. Unfortunately, none of the Hull trolleybuses survived.

Tucked away in the shed is an example of a Tower Wagon which was used to repair the overhead wires



Some of the group remembered riding on the trolleys and there was a definite Sunday School picnic feel as we relived our youth!

The highlight of the day for all of us was a ride on a trolley. In this case, a bright yellow Newcastle Corporation one. We were all struck how quiet and smooth the ride was. There were no rattles or vibrations. The only noise was the occasional click as the poles go over junctions.

We compared trolleys with modern electric buses and did rather feel that the wheel had turned full circle...

There's lots more to see as well as the trolleys and buses. The site has expanded over the years with an

exhibition room detailing the history of trolleybuses. There is a small toy museum and shop fronts with displays of electrical goods and cameras. In a corner of the site is a small prefab furnished much as it might have been in the 1950s-60s. There are also old street signs around the site and examples of street furniture like the blue Police Box (Tardis) and a police telephone box, one of the few to survive.

We all enjoyed the visit and the cakes in the cafe were a bonus.

iPad and Tablet group – David Holmes

This group has now been disbanded due to lack of interest.

Blue Lunch Group – Ann Owen

SCUNTHORPE u3a BLUE LUNCHEON GROUP

Our next venue will be at

THE RED LION

in Redbourne DN21 4QR

Wednesday 28th October 2026

Eating at 12.30pm.

The menu to follow on our WhatsApp group.

Red lunch group - Cheryl Hassall

The October lunch will be at The Sutton Arms, Scawby on Tuesday 20th, 12.30 for 1.00. Menu to follow on the WhatsApp group.

Qi Gong – Mel Ogden

A very welcome return saw the first session after over a year's lay off. Around 20 members gathered for an hour of complete relaxation with gentle stretching exercises included. A lovely way to spend an hour.

Sessions are run on the first and third Friday of each month at St Paul's Hall. It was agreed by the group that, in future, sessions would start at 1.45.

If you are interested in coming along, please contact the group leader Mel Ogden to register your interest.

Quiz Group – Andrew Bullen

The August meeting was another good session with a wide range of topics ranging from history and geography (name the most northerly, easterly and southern railway stations in England) to confectionary who made chocolate delight?) to names of baby animals (porcupettes and puggles...) and finally what number do Italians regard as unlucky? (Seventeen, but we'll leave you to google the story behind that.)

It was a good workout for the brain and dredging up long forgotten knowledge. As always there was a lot of laughter and banter. The session is very light hearted and although delighted if we score ten out of ten, it doesn't matter if it is only one.

The next meeting will be the 1st October 10am until 12 noon at St Paul's small hall.

Rummicub – David Holmes

Our next 2 meetings are the following, Tuesday 6th and 20th October 2026, time 10am to 12pm at Oasis Community Space Cafe, Avenue Vivian, off Ferry Road, Scunthorpe DN15 8LG.

This Group is open to both North Lindsey and Scunthorpe u3a members and will be running every 2 weeks.

If you have got a set of Rummikub, please bring it along with you if you are coming to these meetings.

New members are welcome to join our group to have fun and if you've not played before we can teach you.

If you cannot make it to these meetings, please let me know by contacting my mobile.

Singing for fun – Mary Magee

The singing for fun group is doing really well and we have lots of fun.

The next meeting is on the 13th October at the Scunthorpe Bowls Club.

Scrabble Group – Wendy England

The next Scrabble Group meeting will be **Wednesday 7th October** 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.

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.