



STRAY BITS - FEBRUARY 2024

Welcome to the first Stray Bits of 2024 and thank you to everyone who has sent in details of their group and what they have done, or their plans for 2024. It is great to hear from you. The committee has been busy on our behalf and the new venue, St Mark's Church, was overflowing with members at the first meeting this year. It was very exciting to see so many friends there and I look forward to the next meeting about Richard III on 23rd February. Meanwhile see below to see what else is on that one might like to dip into.....! **Valerie Cooke Ed.**



Stray Bits Omnibus online, contains 100 issues taken from its 20 years of publication. Join the 25 members who already have these glimpses of Harrogate U3A in the 21st century.

The History of Art series of lectures for this (academic) year is drawing to a close as we look at the legacy of Impressionism and the development of the Art of the C20. The remaining talks are 28th February Seurat -enough to drive you dotty! 13th March - The seeds of Modern Art. There is no meeting on 27th March and the series concludes with Fauvism (1905) on 10th April, and finally on 24th April with Cubism (1907).

We will then be on a summer break until September. We have had 118 members this year, with the largest attendance so far of 85 on 22nd November for the talk on Sisley and Caillebotte.

Brian Souter



U3A NATURALISTS GROUP. Our next two meetings will be indoors: both at 2pm, Woodlands Methodist Church Hall. On Tuesday 13th February – Wildlife of Crete and on Tuesday 12th March – Geology of some of Yorkshire's beauty spots. During the summer months we have trips out and about including to RSPB Fairburn Ings, Malham tarn, Upper Nidderdale, and the Hoffman kiln. On May 14th we are going on a coach trip to Washington Wildfowl and Wetland with a meal on the way home. New members are very welcome. Contact **Isobel Beard** via the website

The **Painting for Pleasure** group started the new term with an Acrylic workshop with Nigel Overton a well known artist from Ilkley. Nigel showed members new techniques and how to use acrylics effectively. It was a well attended and enjoyable afternoon lots of fun, laughter and artwork in the workshop. The year has got off to a good start and the painting group is now full. Plans for the year include a 3 monthly topic which members can follow or do their own artwork. There is an oil group who have produced superb artwork of animals, buildings and landscapes. The mixed media group also very busy with different themes. The drawing group have great fun as Pat who is a very experienced and talented artist tries to get her motley crew to improve their drawing skills. Lots of trees, flowers drawn, now portraits. Concentrating on facial features proved challenging. Who would have



thought that eyes could be so complex!! The group are looking forward to workshops and exhibitions throughout the year. The group could not carry on without Janet and Jean who assist me with organising and managing the group, therefore I say many thanks for their support. Most U3A groups rely on members assisting or supporting the group and this is very important to keep groups going in these challenging times. 'Painting for Pleasure' is a social art group and members have a warm happy hall to do their art work and meet likeminded people and can have three hours just for themselves. **Liz Fredriksen**

Signing For Pleasure. Group Leader, **Eric Vernon**

The **Group** continues to provide exciting and enjoyable harmony singing for our members under our new conductor **Carmel Wake**. We always welcome people for the lower voices (Bass. Baritone and Tenor) but also would welcome any top sopranos (who can reach the high notes up to G and A! .We meet on Wednesday mornings and can be contacted via the Harrogate U3A website / Groups/ and look for the email link "Singing For Pleasure":



Travelling abroad? Don't forget to renew your free European insurance. The old card when renewed has become the 'UK Global Health Insurance Card'.

How to Keep Fit as an older person? This is a problem many of us have, however

Exercise and Fitness with Jo Finnegan is one way! Join the Exercise and Fitness group on Tuesday afternoons and see how much fitter you become. A trial session costs just £5 and is deducted from the termly fee which is adjusted according to when you join. Contact Val for more information at valerie@cooke989.plus.com

(The Exercise Groups are managed by Val Cooke for U3A members but not as part of Harrogate U3A)

Tai Chi for a relaxing form of exercise and meditation is what we do on Wednesday afternoons. Taken by Nick Rodriquez this group has been going for many years and we welcome everyone. A trial session cost £5 which is taken from the termly costs, and adjusted according to when you join. Why not give it a try? Contact Val for more information.



Painting at Pannal - Brian Graham

Our Exhibition at the library, along with our fellow painting groups, was well received and we have been invited back. At Pannal, we set a monthly theme which we try to follow, but all of the members do not follow it all the time! Peter calls in each week to comment and encourage. We have attempted portraits as the stunning painting of Debbie Harry by Ann demonstrates. **(Hearts**



of Glass – We were all there!) Our new programme includes **stone painting** for which a bag of Scottish cobbles are ready for adornment - having have been purchased from Daleside. Aside from painting the programme includes lunch, sketching, and trips for those days when we cannot use the Chapter House.



Anything but Grey group started 2024 with a visit to Clue HQ escape rooms. Members attempted one of two challenges either “The Betrayal of Cluetankhamun” or “The Dungeon of Doom”. A good time was had by all but unfortunately the puzzles defeated us, and neither group managed to escape before the allotted time was up.

In February, members will tackle the climbing wall at Parthian Climbing on Hornbeam Park, followed in March by a lesson on the potter’s wheel from Billy Cave at Meanwood Valley Farm and a cocktail masterclass at Slingsby’s is being

planned for early April.

Anything but Grey welcomes all u3a members who are interested in trying out new experiences.

For more information please contact via the Groups page on the website

Spanish Intermediate via ZOOM

The class continues online on Monday afternoons at 2pm. I have 4 students, and we are at a level between beginners and intermediate. For further details contact me via the Groups page on the website **Ashley Timson**



Painting & Drawing Group Update.

We are busily working on various themes related to **Weather and Skies, Landscapes/Seascapes, Spring Flowers, Still Life and Youngsters** amongst other topics, with members working in soft and oil pastels, watercolour and acrylic paints, coloured pens, and pencil. Ideas about technique are being exchanged with much interest in creating images by scratching through layers of oil pastel! Different books with images and techniques to inspire us are generally available for perusal each week. We are well into our 11-week term which ends on 19th March, and I hope to run a summer term session for 10 or 11 weeks, starting on 16th April. Group Leader - **Sue Huskins**



Photography Group – Group Leader, Gary Gudjin

After a successful first year in our new home at Bilton Community Centre, we have now planned a full programme for 2024. We have a series of presentations (including Smart Phone Photography and Photo Editing), projects (including Movement and Patterns in Nature), practical sessions and challenges.

We meet on the fourth Monday of each month and are now very close to the maximum number of members that we can accommodate but would still welcome enquiries for new members.

Images from our latest project entitled "Shoes"



(continue. to page 3)

COMMUNICATION NETWORK

Stray Bits for your immediate notices and information.

Copy by 15th March 2024 please to Val Cooke, Editor

Website address – <https://u3asites.org.uk/harrogate/home>

Group Leaders - please give updates to Ian Munday, Website Editor,

Stray News Harrogate U3A Magazine. Editor, Catherine Sauzier

Visit **Facebook** at <https://www.facebook.com/Harrogateu3a>.



**Yorkshire and Humber Region
Summer School**

22nd – 25th July 2024

The Hawkills,

Easingwold, YO61 3EG



Course Topics to choose from:

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Costs for our 3-night top class residential Summer School

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More information including preliminary course details are available along with Booking forms at <https://yahru3a.uk/summer-school/>

The aim of our Summer School is to:

- Provide members with new learning opportunities.
- Enable our members to explore a topic your u3a may not be able to offer.
- Enable delegates, in a magnificent setting, to share time out with other u3a members from across the region and beyond.

We look forward to seeing you.
