



RIPON AND DISTRICT NEWSLETTER DECEMBER- JANUARY

CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

The U3A World War One day was an incredible mix of personal reflections, poetry, music, paintings and unique personal memorabilia. Dorothy Taylor gave a fascinating insight into the changing role of women brought about by the Great War. Maurice Taylor presented a history of the part which Ripon played in housing and training military forces in preparation for going to war.

Our next event is the Christmas Tea which promises to be magical so shake out your glad rags, polish your party shoes, buy your ticket for Monday 17th December and join me for an afternoon of fun.

Kate Swann kateswann47@me.com



[Ooh look! Something else to look forward to!](#)



(Tee-hee! They think we are reindeer! Yes, deer, very amusing)

Editorial

Thomas Tusser (1524-1580, poet and farmer – or perhaps farmer and poet)



Guess what he said (among a myriad of other stuff)!

Yes, it was he who piped “Christmas comes but once a year”, and yes, I have never heard of him either! Someone called “HP” wrote the following on Tusser’s death:

*“So, like the whetstone, many men are wont
To sharpen others, when themselves are blunt.”*

Not quite sure what he meant, but reading between the lines he seems to be suggesting that Thomas was not the sharpest knife in the drawer, but he made one think – HP had a bit of a sauce I say! For all Thomas’s bluntness he knew his parsnips and onions and will be remembered always for pointing out that “Sweet April showers do spring May flowers”, and “A fool and his money are always at debate”. How nicely put, and slightly different from the received version which “parts” a fool and his money. I much prefer a debate before I am ripped off. Which brings me nicely back to Christmas!

Eds

Showcase at the Spa Hotel – JANUARY 28TH, 2019

Yes it’s that time of year again – time’s winged chariot and all that. The January monthly meeting will be a performance showcase! For your delectation and taste bud titillation, a compendium, a veritable cornucopia of gems from our performing arts groups, amongst which will be: Ukulele, Folk, Guitar beginners and advanced, Piano, Poetry, Singing and Shakespeare. Come along and be amazed, and maybe sign up for a *new*, New Year activity!



Group News and Events

(Please direct your submissions to the Editor, Paul Finch email pagfinch@hotmail.com)

And remember – the cut-off date for submissions for the February 2019 newsletter will be 15th January.

Family History Group

We don’t meet in December but we look forward to one of our own members telling us her family story on 29th January at 2pm at The Old Deanery. For further details please email Anne Reid at annereid220@hotmail.com or telephone 01765 650077.

Sunday Lunch Group.

(Members will already have been advised on Beacon and the Website about arrangements for the seasonal lunch). The December lunch will take place on Sunday 9th December in the Turf Bar at 12.30.

editorlittlethorpe@gmail.com telephone 01765 601848



Local History Group

This group meets at Thorpe Prebend House from 10 – 12 noon.

On 24th January Joyce Walmsley will present her on-going project 'Coach Building in Ripon'. She is exploring an industry no longer found in the city and discovering where it all happened, who carried it out and how the industry might have worked.

Les Barclay will do a short session on something that has always intrigued him - and which might be unknown to many Ripon residents - entitled "21 Water Skellgate, Ripon. Where is it?"

For further information contact Maurice Taylor at maurice.taylor@ripcoms.net 01765 604778

Midweek Lunch Group (New Leader Barbara Robertson)

The U3A midweek lunch group is starting up again in January. The first lunch date is at the Black-a-Moor Inn on Wednesday 16th January. Please phone Barbara on 01765 604318 by Monday 14th January if you would like to join us. We are a friendly chatty group and welcome new members.

Photographic Group

Please note that there is to be a change of venue from Wednesday, 16th January 2019, when meetings will be held at The Old Deanery, opposite the Cathedral, as usual on the first and third Wednesdays each month, starting at 2.00pm. New members are always welcome.

juliabertenshaw@yahoo.co.uk 01765 601201

Walking Group

Winter is here but let's hope that we can still get some good walks in the next two months.

Tuesday 4th December – John Bushell is leading a 4 mile walk from Masham starting at the town square at 10.15am, or meeting at High Cleugh at 9.45am to share transport. The easy walk is along river banks and there is the opportunity to have lunch at the White Bear afterwards. John's contact no. is 07763 391843

Wednesday 12th December – Sandra is leading a 7mile walk from Pateley Bridge, starting at the Nidd Walk car park at 10am, or meeting at High Cleugh at 9.30am to share transport. The walk follows the Nidderdale Way to Smelthouses and back by the river, and a packed lunch is required. Sandra's contact no. is 07990 507879.

Wednesday 19th December -Brian and Astrid are leading a 4mile walk from South Stainley, starting at the Inn, GRSE433633 at 10.30am, or meeting at High Cleugh at 10am to share transport. The walk goes via Burton Leonard and is mainly on surfaced tracks, with 3 stiles. Will be followed by a lunch option at South Stainley. Brian's contact no. is 01765 620359.

Wednesday 9th January – Margaret Smith is leading a 6mile walk, starting at the Ripon Canal Basin (corner of Bondgate Green and Canal Road) at 10.00am and walking to Bishop Monkton and back to Ripon. Lunch option in Ripon afterwards. Margaret's contact no. is 07448 781610.

Monday 14th January – Mike is leading a 5mile easy walk, with a few stiles, from Green Hammerton. Meeting at High Cleugh at 9.30am to share transport or at the Bay Horse pub at 10am. Lunch available at the Bay Horse afterwards. Mike's contact no. is 07972 613127.

Tuesday 22nd January - Peter and Carole are leading an undulating 5mile walk from Copgrove, meeting at High Cleugh at 9.30am to share transport or at 10am at Copgrove church. There is a lunch option afterwards. Peter's contact no. is 07960 264428.

Wednesday 30th January – David Swann is leading a 5.5mile flat walk from Husthwaite via four villages and several Norman churches. Meet at High Cleugh at 9.30am to share transport or Husthwaite church GRSE 518751 at 10.15am. Lunch available at Easingwold afterwards but a hot drink is recommended for the walk. David's contact no. 07971 247062.

At the moment, we only have three walks offered for February, on 5th, 13th and 19th. If you would like to offer an additional walk for that month, please contact Christine on 01423 324011. The full list of walks is now on the Ripon U3A website, via the link on the walking group page. It will be updated as necessary

Readers Group

This group meets every second Thursday of the month at 2pm in the Old Deanery. On 13th December we are planning to meet at 12.30 at the Old Deanery to enjoy lunch before discussing “Eleanor Oliphant is completely fine” by Gail Honeyman.

If you would like to join us for lunch please call Sue Hutchinson on 01765 601302. The list of books we are discussing for the next six months can be found on the website. For further details please email s.hutchinson@live.co.uk (01765 601302) or hilhunter@live.com

Science for All

Seventeen members of the Science for All group visited the Lime Tree Observatory at Grewelthorpe on the evening of 12th November. We were met by Martin who was keen to get us outside under the stars as soon as we arrived in order to make the most of the clear sky. It was our lucky night as, with the Milky Way visible overhead, our gaze was directed towards constellations and distant galaxies. We took turns to peer through a telescope at the moon, spotted satellites moving across the sky and were delighted by several shooting stars. We even saw bright flashes of reflected sunlight from a lump of orbiting space junk. As we started to feel the cold, we were ushered inside to the lecture room where we warmed up with hot tea and chocolate biscuits before Martin gave us a talk on the Leonid Meteor Shower. This occurs every year around the 17th November as the Earth passes through the dust from the tail of a comet. He showed us photographs of some of the largest meteors to have landed on Earth as meteorites and passed one around that was just big enough to hold in the hand and incredibly heavy for its size. We then climbed up into the dome housing the 24inch reflecting telescope where Martin told us about its history. It was built in the 1970s by a man called John Wall and at the time was the largest amateur-built telescope in the world. It was in danger of being scrapped but was rescued by Peter Foster, the owner of Lime Tree Farm, and transported to Grewelthorpe. Unfortunately, we didn't get to look through it this time as opening the dome could have exposed it to wind damage. So, we were lucky with the clear skies but unlucky with the wind! However, Martin's enthusiasm for his subject, the knowledge we came away with and the awesome view of the night sky made for a fascinating evening.



Monday 10 December we are back in the Old Deanery for a talk by Laurence Bishop on Pharmaceuticals.

Monday 14 January is a visit to Allerton Waste Recovery Park. Being limited to 15 places this visit soon filled. If there is sufficient interest, we could arrange another visit, so please let me know your views.

For the latest information check our Ripon U3A Science for All webpage or contact Keith Surman on 01765 605055 Email - kjsurman@outlook.com

U3A visit to the Metro Centre

Please note that this visit has been cancelled due to insufficient numbers

Singing Group

The Singing Group will be having a busy December. Please make a note of the following concerts and meetings. Details will be given at weekly meetings.



Monday 3rd December: Concert at Burton Leonard

Thursday 6th December: Singing in Ripon Market square.

Monday 10th December: Regular weekly rehearsal at Allhallowgate.

Friday 14th December: Concert at Sycamore Lodge.

Monday 17th December: Singing at U3A Christmas Tea.

We resume our regular meetings in the New Year on 7th, 14th and 21st January. Contact David Swann 01765 600068 for further information.

Theatre Visits Group

Future visit plans:

Dec 13th The Nutcracker at Leeds Grand

Jan 30th 2019 Abigail's Party at York Grand Opera

Feb 16th Kes at the West Yorkshire Playhouse Pop Up Theatre

Mar 9th Hello Dolly at the Harrogate Theatre

Keep an eye on Theatre Group Visits / U3A website <https://u3asites.org.uk/ripon/page/17586>

Keep in mind also that we do, when timings allow, try to arrange pre –theatre lunches together, which can make the day even more enjoyable.

Contact Rodney Towers:-rhtowers@btinternet.com

Some happy Table Tennis

players for you! (One or two on the front row look a bit batty to me!)

(Photo taken by A Dinner Lady at North Stainley Village Hall – so we could get Hilary in – she is standing up in the middle also looking batty.)



“Have your say!”

The “Have your say” group meets on Friday December 14th at 2pm in the Old Deanery when we will discuss “Education: opportunity and equality?” Some of us are meeting at 12 noon at the OD for lunch. Let me know if you will be joining us please ring Dorothy Taylor on 01765 604778

Poetry for Pleasure

There will be no meeting in December. The next meeting will be on Monday January 21st at 2pm in the Old Deanery when we will read poetry about “Winter”. Dorothy Taylor 01765 604778.

Skell Scriveners and the Pleasure of Writing

Skell Scriveners is a creative writing group. Paul, the editor of this newsletter, suggested I might write a piece about this particular gathering. I am a member of Skell Scriveners but have also been visiting other groups to share and explain their different interests.

As writers we have one thing in common, a sense of pleasure in putting words together. We each write and present our pieces to the group for comment. There will be helpful criticism and encouragement where necessary.

We might write short stories, opinion pieces, poems, or longer work - some members have written books. There is no required format, and variety is invited. The two members who lead the group are Kate Swann and Marla Skidmore who are both published writers, and we are proud of their achievements. They offer one or other of their homes to us for our meetings which usually happen twice a month.

Most members have been writing for pleasure or interest for some years and feel comfortable reading out their work to the others. The group has been in existence for more than five years.

From time to time we visit outside places, for inspiration. One hot Summer day at Fountains Abbey comes to mind.....

We are currently collecting material for an anthology of our work. This will contain a range of genres which will represent each of us in one form or another. If you are inclined to find out more about Skell Scriveners, telephone Kate Swann, 01765 600068 or Marla Skidmore 01423 329107 for a chat. The only requirement is that you enjoy putting your thoughts and ideas on paper and are happy to accept some positive criticism.

Lesley Taylor – usually roaming but this time embedded



Sycamore Hall Care Home – Ukulele group visit



The residents were able to join in with many of the tunes such as “When the Saints Go Marching In” and “This Little Light of Mine” as well as the John Denver classics “Take Me Home Country Roads” and “Leaving on a Jet Plane”. All in all a very enjoyable hour for players and residents.

Sue Griggs (also responsible for the photo – how does she do it – take the photo and appear in it!? Far left)

Having it both ways? – By our own intrepid correspondent.



Two-faced? – Janus, the Roman god we get the month of January from. Janus: the symbol of looking back, closing doors and opening new ones, crossing new thresholds into an uncertain future.

Looking back: In view of our age group we can rejoice in a store of memories – as long as we don't impose them on the reluctant ears of grandchildren, making comparisons between then and now – and are selective in our recall of painful incidents better forgotten. Janus is pointing to the importance of shutting doors – seeking closure and being aware of the potential dangers of looking back. We are warned by Lot's wife turned into a pillar of salt because she looked back on the destruction of Sodom, and Orpheus who lost Eurydice in the underworld because he looked back.

Looking forward: again it's a question of personal balance - weighing up freedom of leisure and learning time, longer holidays, rejoicing in the inspiration and aspirations of another generation, against the potential problems of our own ageing. And building our own little cocoons to protect us from complete despair in a fragmenting world.

Janus got it pretty well right balancing past and present, just as we do in our U3A, with his second face turned towards the future. We use past experiences and expertise. We enhance our interests both old and new - in our fifty groups and in the range of topics covered by our speakers. We have the chance to keep the past alive in groups like collectibles or in our three different history groups. Likewise, we combine present and past in music, literature, language – and we look to our own future by having leaders like Caroline keep us physically fit in her exercise classes, and Dorothy mentally alert in her discussion group. Having it both ways – full marks to Janus and to the U3A!

A STUDY DAY: February 2nd - "The Thirties - the Threshold of Change"

**COME AND ENJOY AN INTERESTING AND INFORMATIVE DAY ABOUT THE THIRTIES WITH 3 SPEAKERS LOOKING AT THE POLITICAL SOCIAL AND STYLE OF THE PERIOD. THIS WILL BE A DAY NOT TO BE MISSED STARTING AT 10AM AND FINISHING AT 3PM COST £10. VENUE ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CHAPEL BONDGATE RIPON.
(BOOKING FORM IN SEPARATE EMAIL)**



Theatre Visits Group – Looking Back (but not in anger!)



September 2018. Scarborough was chosen for our annual “away day” trip to a theatre beyond our normal locations of Leeds, York & Harrogate. Nineteen members went by coach to the Stephen Joseph Theatre to see the 40th anniversary production of Alan Ayckbourn’s ‘Joking Apart’ - good Alan Ayckbourn stuff!

In October, seventeen members travelled to Leeds to see the fast and furious production of ‘The Comedy about a Bank Robbery’. It was felt that Mischief Theatre Productions owed a lot to the ingenious set design and some technically clever special effects. The production was full of slapstick humour and gags with a talented cast who could meet the physical demands and mastered the comedy timings to perfection.

In November, members made their own ways to York to meet up at the Theatre Royal to see their adaption of Jane Austen’s novel ‘Sense and Sensibility’. Members’ consensus was that this was a hugely enjoyable production.

Rodney Towers

**AND FINALLY, FROM DONNA AND BLITZEN, PRANCER AND DANCER...
(OH, YOU SAID “WILL THERE BE RAIN DEAR?” SORRY!! OOH YOU ARE A
CARD – NO, THIS IS A CARD) FROM THE COMMITTEE!**

