

Whitby Whaler  
April 2024

**u3a**  
learn, laugh, live



## Message from the Chair

I have to report some very sad news, the death of Ray Ward, the Caretaker at St John Ambulance Hall. Apparently, he died suddenly of a heart attack on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> March. Many of you will remember Ray from the many years when most of our groups met in St John Ambulance Hall – he was always very friendly and helpful to our group leaders, in many cases putting out tables and chairs before the meetings and was very supportive of our u3a. His partner Jane Easton has been appointed as Acting Caretaker until the summer so the two groups which currently meet there, History and Monthly Lectures, will be able to continue. The future of the building after then is not yet known.

I'm pleased to see that we have a number of new groups, definite or proposed, this month. The backgammon group which was mentioned in last month's newsletter is going ahead, as is a new singing group, and we have proposals for a psychology group and to reinstate the bridge group, which closed some years ago. Details of all these can be found in this Newsletter. Although we have around 40 different groups, it's good to be able to offer a wider range, especially as we have over 100 new members this year, in fact some of the proposed new groups were suggested at our new members' meeting.

As mentioned in previous Newsletters there are still vacancies for new Committee members, and in particular we are looking for someone to take on the role of publicity officer, to spread the good word about our u3a around the town and surroundings and help recruit more new members. If anyone is interested in joining the committee but would like more details please contact me at [twbarrowcliffe@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:twbarrowcliffe@yahoo.co.uk), or on 01947 600963 – you would be welcome to sit in on a committee meeting without any commitment.

## Music Appreciation Group

In the March session the group listened to piano music mostly from Scandinavia, with solo piano pieces by Grieg, Sibelius and Nielsen, ending with the Grieg's ever popular piano concerto. In April we will resume our travels round the world, returning to the Czech and Slovak Republics, with pieces by several composers. The date is the last Friday in April, the 26<sup>th</sup>, and the meeting will be at our usual venue, Flowergate United Reformed Church, upper room, from 2 – 4pm.

*Trevor Barrowcliffe*

## Concert Outing – Last Chance!

The next concert outing is to the Sage Gateshead on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> April; just to remind you of the programme: *Carl Nielsen: Helios Overture*, *Sergei Rachmaninov: Piano Concerto No. 2*, *Jean Sibelius: Symphony No. 5*.

There is one ticket left; if anyone is interested in going, please contact me (contact details in Message from Chairman). The concert starts at 7.30pm and the coach will leave Whitby at 4.45pm. Cost of the ticket is £35, and the coach fare is £20.

*Trevor Barrowcliffe*

## National U3A Festival, July 2024

As mentioned in the last Newsletter the National U3A Festival will be held at York University from Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> July to Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> July. There will be a wide variety of activities - talks, sporting events, musical entertainment and workshops. Details of the schedule and costs are as follows:

- Day 1, Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> July (from lunchtime) - £25 including buffet supper or £5 without supper
- Day 2, Friday 19<sup>th</sup> July - £8 for the day (9am to 6pm), £10 for the full day, including the evening session
- Day 3, Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> July (morning) - £5 for a half day
- Full festival to include all 3 days and a buffet supper on Day 1 - £35

For those who would like to stay for the three days accommodation on the University campus is fully booked, so you would have to arrange accommodation elsewhere in York. Two of our music groups (Whaler Band and Ukulele Orchestra) will be performing on Friday the 19<sup>th</sup>, and a coach has been arranged (cost £10) – a list is available at coffee mornings to sign up or contact Anne Jackson on [annejay1234ra@gmail.com](mailto:annejay1234ra@gmail.com) or 01947 810590.

All members, including performers, will have to register online. Registration is not yet open but when it is there is expected to be a huge demand for tickets so you'll need to get in quick. An email will be sent round when the registration is open; check the national u3a website ([www.u3a.org.uk](http://www.u3a.org.uk)) under Events for further information about the festival.

## New Groups

### Backgammon

As mentioned in the last newsletter Helen Martin has offered to lead a backgammon group; a number of members have signed up but if anyone else is interested can you please contact Helen on [philandhelenmusic@gmail.com](mailto:philandhelenmusic@gmail.com) or 07854031133. If you haven't played before it's an easy game to learn. The sessions will take place on Thursday afternoons at the Rifle Club.

### Singing Group

Derek Robinson has offered to start a new singing group – see Derek's article in this newsletter for further details.

### Psychology Group

A member of the creative writing group, Jenny Waite-Jones, who is a trained psychologist, has offered to lead a psychology group. A list will be available at the April coffee morning but in the meantime if you are interested, please contact Jenny on [j.m.waite-jones@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:j.m.waite-jones@leeds.ac.uk) or on 07484631560.

From Jenny, herself:

A knowledge of psychology can help in achieving greater understanding of our own thoughts, feelings, and behaviour as well as those of others.

The aim of the psychology group is to explore how some core psychological theories and studies can be helpful in explaining the impact of major changes across a person's lifespan, including childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and older adulthood. For example:

Childhood, it is important to examine the fast rate of mental and emotional development during infancy and, particularly the development of strong attachments between children and their caregivers to ensure they gain a sense of security, stable self-identity, and ability to socialise successfully with others.

Such development can impact on how people cope with later potentially stressful life-stages including:

Adolescence, when searching for an individual identity as teenagers prepare for new adult roles whilst facing peer group influence and vulnerability to risk taking behaviour during this period.

Adulthood, during emotional partner relationships leading to parenthood, family formation, work-life tensions, physical changes and eventually establishing new ways of relating to teenage and grown-up children.

Older adulthood, when adapting to physical changes, retirement/reinvention and caring for others as well as potential negative attitudes within society.

Sessions will involve information on different psychological theories about these topics, case studies and group discussion. Just in case you need any further information, after speaking to Sandra we agreed that meetings would take place on a Monday or Friday mornings or afternoons. She was going to look at how this could be timetabled in and let me know. I could do any time but expect that 10.00am to 12noon or 2.00pm-4pm would suit people. I thought that it would be useful to offer these fortnightly as 2-hour sessions if this seems ok.

## u3a Singers

The u3a Singers have a very important occasion to attend on 13<sup>th</sup> April.

It takes place at the Whitby Pavilion and celebrates the birthday of the man behind the building of the Saloon, as it was originally called. His name was Sir George Elliot. He was a coal mining multimillionaire who at the time was one of the six richest men in our country. Our performing troupe will be singing a lovely selection of songs from the Music Hall era as part of the evening's entertainment, and they would appreciate your support. The "Friends of Whitby Pavilion" are most grateful to them for giving their precious time in rehearsals. After the Easter holiday we return on Wednesday, 17<sup>th</sup> April, when in a celebration of the Paris, Olympic Games in July and August, we will put together a selection of songs connected to the French language, some more tenuous than others. You are welcome to come along and join in.

## Whaler Band

During March the Whaler Band continued the 2024 European tour with a performance in Sleights. We played at Church House to entertain the Revival group, after their weekly lunch meeting. The event seemed to go well, with most of the audience singing along with our programme of hits from the 1940s, 50s and 60s. We are hoping to play for the Revival group sometime in May, for their meeting in Danby. The Whaler Band is available for parties, weddings, christenings and any event with a buffet.

## Recorder Group

As always, members of the recorder group have enjoyed weekly meetings of ensemble playing- so good for the soul! Some new music has been added to the repertoire and we are delighted to welcome a new member.

We resume meetings on 9<sup>th</sup> April, 11.45 at the Rifle Club. Happy Easter break to everyone.

## u3a Theatre Visits Group

Following our first trip to Sunderland Empire and The Drifters Girl on 28<sup>th</sup> March our next show in 2024 is

**EDWARD SCISSORHANDS**

A Matthew Bourne Ballet

Theatre Royal Newcastle Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> April 2024 2pm Matinee (fully booked)

Pick up in Whitby from 8.55am

We still have seats available for LORD of the DANCE. Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> August at 2.30pm. York Barbican. Please get in touch if you would like to join us. All other shows are fully booked at present.

Reserves are most welcome as we often have cancellations.

Thank you. Rose Corner ☺

[rosiecorner@gmail.com](mailto:rosiecorner@gmail.com) 07790896062

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Age Stagers

Rehearsals for our next show are building to a crescendo: "Pick 'n Mix" is a variety show packed full of songs, sketches, dance and jokes as with any pick and mix there are some well-loved favourites mixed with some new flavours - our regular audiences know it will be fun!

Show at the Rifle Club: Ticket availability: Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> May 7.30 plenty, Friday 10<sup>th</sup> 7.30 selling fast, Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> SOLD OUT. Get your tickets at the April Coffee Morning or from Jan 07949264022 [jan.jenn@hotmail.com](mailto:jan.jenn@hotmail.com)

### Gardening Group

**April Trip: Monday 8<sup>th</sup> April** - Trip to Mount Grace Priory & Gardens & Arcadia Garden Centre Lunch, leaving Harrison's Garage at 9.00am, other locations as agreed.

**May Talk: Monday 13<sup>th</sup> May** - The final talk for this year is "Gardening the World" with Jonathan Gilby, Commonwealth War Graves Commission. This is an opportunity to learn more about the horticulture of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission around the world, discover the stories of the commission's early gardeners, and families who have been tending these sites for generations.

**Future Trips:** We also have some places left on the Temple Newsham trip and will also be collecting for the final trip of the year on 1<sup>st</sup> July. Please bring a cheque/cash), plus an envelope with your name, contact number, pick-up point and menu choices where required. Any queries please contact Joyce on 07868 956919

### Whitby Neighbourhood Plan (WNP)

Producing a Neighbourhood Plan, that influences the future development of the parish, is the most important thing a town or parish will ever do, so we are keen for all Whitby & District residents to take part. If you have not already done so please take part before May, by completing a simple questionnaire available online at <https://bit.ly/48GkBQm> For those people who are either not online, or prefer paper form surveys, I will have paper copies available at the April Coffee morning. More information on this project is available at <https://www.whitbycommunitynetwork.org/whitby-neighbourhood-plan/>

We are also asking if there is a member (s) of Whitby Whalers u3a who would like to be more closely involved, possibly as a member of WNP Steering Group, if yes please contact Joyce Stangoe [joyce.stangoe@gmail.com](mailto:joyce.stangoe@gmail.com) for more information.

### Discussion Group

I am delighted to report that our twice monthly Discussion Group is thriving. We usually attract 15-18 members for each session. Our meetings for the rest of the year are as follows: - 8<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> April; 13<sup>th</sup> May. Meetings are held at the Coliseum in the Hopkinson Room and start at 2.30pm.

## History Group

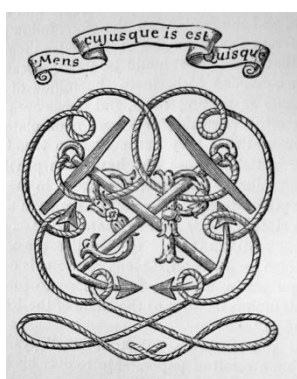
St. John Ambulance Hall Thursdays (weekly). 2 – 4 pm



Katherine Johnson

The series of history talks continued in the period up to Easter, covering a range of topics from internationally significant women to members of an important local Whitby family. Marian Brockway's presentation on 'Four special ladies' introduced us to some particularly special individuals, including one of NASA's famous "human computers". Katherine Johnson stands among NASA's most inspirational figures: a trailblazer in the quest for racial equality and a contributor to the first triumphs in human spaceflight.

During March, Clair Stones and David Bradley gave excellent presentations on 'The Chapmans of Whitby' and 'A Quartet of Christians' respectively. We are very grateful to Clair and David for holding the fort while we were away.



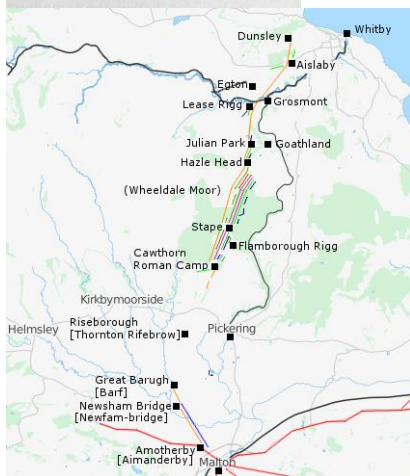
Following the Easter break, our programme continues with the following talks:

Thursday, 11<sup>th</sup> April 'The First Civil Servant' Tim Deane

Thursday, 18<sup>th</sup> April 'The Cuban Missile Crisis' Richard Appleton

Thursday, 25<sup>th</sup> April 'What did the Romans do for Whitby & North Yorkshire?' John Gibbins

Can you work out who the 'first civil servant' is from the clues in the bookplate shown here? (The motto translates as 'Mind makes the Man').



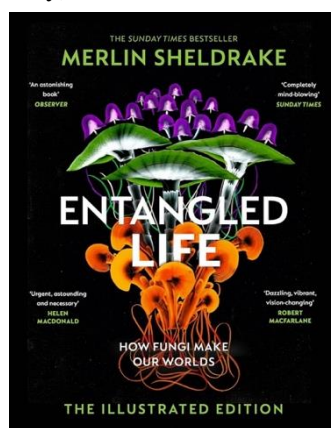
Our programme for April ends with a special guest presentation from John Gibbins on 'What did the Romans do for Whitby & North Yorkshire?' [Note that the class fee for this particular lecture will be £3.00].

Map showing the Roman road over Wheeldale moor.

Trips to Barnard Castle and Ripon are planned for the group in May (May 9<sup>th</sup> and May 23<sup>rd</sup>, respectively) and details of these will be given out at our meeting on April 11<sup>th</sup>.

## Monthly Lecture Group

St. John Ambulance Hall Tuesdays (3rd monthly), 10 – 12 noon.



Our lecture in March was given by David Minter (chair of Whitby Naturalists' Club) on the role and importance of fungi in many aspects of the natural world ('The importance of fungi in biodiversity').

David is an enthusiast and an acknowledged expert in this field and it's not surprising, therefore, that his talk was fascinating and very slickly presented.

Fungi have been a neglected lifeform in our discussions on biodiversity, so this lecture was very appropriate and parallels the publication of

‘Entangled Life’ – an award-winning and ground-breaking book on the subject.

Our presentation in April will be given by John McEachen and covers a part of the world that is less well known to us but full of intriguing cultural history and unfamiliar wildlife.

Tuesday, 16<sup>th</sup> April ‘A Glimpse into the cultures & Birds of Central Asia’

J.McEachen

Lands of Ghengis Khan, vast steppes, yurts, The Silk Road and much, much more.... John has been lucky enough over the past 25 years to be able to join with expeditions run by Zoology Departments from various Central Asian universities to explore these varied, almost mythical lands. Working with locals has allowed him an insight into their cultures, history, geography and wildlife (mainly birds).

(a)



(a) A Kazakhstani performer demonstrates the long equestrian heritage.

(b)



(b) Central downtown Astana, Kazakhstan.

Do come along to enjoy another interesting presentation – all very welcome.

**And finally:** the most important note relating to both the History and the Monthly Lecture groups is to record our debt to Ray Ward, the caretaker at St. John Ambulance Hall, for all his help and kindness to us over the years, but most particularly as we have returned to the hall this past year. Ray’s untimely recent death has come as a great shock to us.

Ray was a tremendously steadfast friend to our groups and a very real help to their functioning. He and his partner Jane became real friends and participants in our groups, showing a real, knowledgeable interest in the topics we discussed. Ray will be very much missed by us all and we offer Jane all our support over the coming months. Thank you, Ray, for your cheerful help and friendship over the years.

## Philosophy Group

We meet at 2:30pm (to 4pm) on the 1st and 3rd (but \*not\* the 5th) Monday of each month. 2024 dates begin on 15<sup>th</sup> January. Our venue is Flowergate URC Church on Flowergate opposite Skinner Street. Entrance is the large glass door on the right-hand side of the stone (not brick) building. We will start the year exploring the thinking of Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau on the Social Contract.

I am looking forward to hearing your thoughtful and constructive contributions.

If you have any questions do not hesitate to contact me on 07 974 145779 or [graham.c.robinson@gmail.com](mailto:graham.c.robinson@gmail.com)

## Photography Class

The Photography Class has been running for a number of years now, with members coming & going, hopefully leaving as better photographers. The class now has a new format, Lance Garrard is now giving the talks, going through the theory from basics

to advanced., Lance has produced his own AUDIO/VIDEO which is split into sessions for each class. There are links provided so class members can dip in & out in their own time. We are now starting to think about going out for practical sessions as the weather starts to improve. Our classes are on the 2nd and last Tuesday of the month at Whitby Rifle Club between 2pm and 4pm on the ground floor. Both Lance and I are members of Whitby Photography Society. For our last competitions there were two on the same night. The briefs were: A photo which would be "A suitable cover for a book". Lance won this competition.



A photo showing a "frame in a frame " I won this competition. Contact me if you'd like to join. 01947820245

[donreadman@gmail.com](mailto:donreadman@gmail.com)

## Amblers Walking Group



Amblers Group visiting St Hilda's Well, Hinderwell

## Cycling Club

The weather in March conspired against getting out cycling. However, with lighter evenings and, hopefully, improving weather, I am planning to hold group rides as follows:-

Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> April meet by Beevers at 1.30pm for a ride to the Coast Cafe then back via Hawsker Church and Green Lane. (an easy starter session)

Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> April meet by the Castle Park bus stop at 9.30am for a ride via Newholm, Dunsley, Hutton Mulgrave, Egton and Aislaby ( about 90mins cycling)

Monday 15<sup>th</sup> April meet by Beevers at 6pm for an easy evening ride to Hawsker, Highgate Howe and Green Lane.

Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> meet by the bus stop at Castle Park, 9.30am for a ride via Newholm, Dunsley, Hutton Mulgrave, Lythe and Sandsend (about 90 mins cycling)

Monday 29<sup>th</sup> April, meet by Beevers at 6pm for evening ride to Hawsker, Gnipe Howe, Whitby Laithes and Green Lane. Alan Holmes

## Play Reading Group

The Play Reading Group will continue to meet every Tuesday at the Cricket Pavilion in Whitby from 2-4pm over the Easter period and onwards. We are currently halfway through Agatha Christie's 'Death on the Nile' – but with no Hercule Poirot! How can that be? The book and the film feature Hercule but until we received the play, we did not realise he would be written out. We are enjoying most of it despite that, although some of the use of now out-dated language has raised a few eyebrows. Our future planned plays are Look Back in Anger by John Osborne, Rookery Nook by Ben Travers and Billy Liar by Keith Waterhouse.

Places are available if anyone would like to join our Group. Just turn up at the designated time and place and you will be made very welcome.

George Osborne [mandgosb@gmail.com](mailto:mandgosb@gmail.com) 07753609166

## TOAST



u3a TOAST Group 24th March Members enjoying Sunday Lunch at The Stiddy, Lythe. Thank you to Jill Hunter for organising.

There will be the regular monthly TOAST meeting on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> April at the Penny Hedge starting at 10am.

Best wishes. Rose Corner

## Dates for your Diary

TOAST coffee morning. 6<sup>th</sup> April 10 am Penny Hedge

Coffee Morning 20<sup>th</sup> April 2024 10 to 11.30 Rifle Club

National u3a Festival Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> July to Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> July York University

AGM Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2024

The next newsletter will be produced on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2024  
Deadline for copy (which should be sent to: [sheilasloan@btinternet.com](mailto:sheilasloan@btinternet.com)) is 26<sup>th</sup> April 2024