

York Newsletter



Number 180 August 2019



www.yorku3a.com

15a Clifford Street, York YO1 9RG
Registered charity number 1007843

☎ 01904 633726

Contents

	Page
Chairman's Remarks,	3
Editorial	4
Groups Co-ordinator Report	5
Early Days of Cinema & Scrabble	6
Hearing Problems, and Trial	7
Website Changes, Using Equipment	8
Armchair Travellers	9
Bible Exploring	10
YAHR Summer School	12
Crossword	13
Committee, Contacts, Office Opening	14
Saturday Morning Talks+ Solution to Crossword	15
Baltic States Visit Report	19
Sunderland Glass Trip	22
Booking Form Sunderland Glass Trip	23

Front cover picture:

Bridges over the Ouse

This is Lendal Bridge, the subject of a recent Saturday morning talk, so I guess most would know more than I do about it. It does seem hardly anytime ago that it was the subject of a hot debate regarding traffic flow over it.

Anyway, the river still flows downstream, and the picture shows the downstream view.



Chairman's remarks

So, we come towards the end of another successful U3A year. Saturday's morning talk, and this newsletter, are the last of the 2018-19 session before we gear up to start again in September. The success of any U3A year, and the 'gearing up' process before the next one begins – the membership renewals process involves a great deal of work on the part of a team of office volunteers, and our Membership Secretary in particular – depend entirely on the willingness and commitment of the different teams of volunteers who make it all possible. So, it is appropriate for my open remark to be a heartfelt 'Thank you' to all those of you who volunteer in any capacity and thereby keep our branch running.

I need to follow this up with an apology and explanation. Since the circulation of our last newsletter I have given approval for an email to be sent out to all those of our members who use email, without simultaneously sending out a hard-copy letter to those who don't. I felt that this break with longstanding practice was justified by the urgency of the need to advertise the Travel Group's planned trip to India in time for members to take up the few remaining places on the trip before the travel agent's deadline, without which the trip was in danger of being cancelled. That deadline could not have been met had the email had to wait for letters to be prepared, posted and received by those members who do not use email. So I decided, on balance, that the benefit to those already committed to the trip who might otherwise miss out, and the benefit to the majority of our members who do have email addresses, who were being afforded the opportunity to make last-minute bookings, had in this instance to trump the disadvantage to those who don't have emails.

At its meeting on 10th July the committee approved the precedent being set by this decision: where the majority of our members would be significantly disadvantaged by an email communication having to be delayed so that members without email can be contacted by post simultaneously, the benefit to the majority will be seen to outweigh the disadvantage to the minority. The circumstances in this particular case were, however, very unusual and we will, of course, in normal circumstances try to make sure that members are not disadvantaged in any way by not using email.

The only other matter I would like to report briefly on is a very productive meeting held in June between representatives of the York and Haxby U3A committees. A wide range of topics was covered: from the possible replacement of our annual membership cards with plastic cards and scanners; to recording Saturday morning talks and holding a second monthly meeting each month; to arranging bridge, table-tennis and other competitions between teams from the two U3As; to organizing combined workshop/study days. Our committee agreed that many of the issues we discussed should be followed up. So, as the saying goes, watch this space.

In the meantime, I hope the summer will be good to you.

David Maughan Brown

Editorial

For the newsletter send your copy to newsletter@yorku3a.com ideally in Arial font size 11 with no underlining except for e-links **on or before 12:00am Monday 9th September**. for the October 2019 issue, for publishing on Friday 20th Sept or, post/hand your copy to: Newsletter, York U3A, 15a Clifford Street, York, YO1 9RG -same deadline of course

YES, IT IS EARLIER THAN NORMAL!

Crossword

This issue's Crossword has been provided by Mike Heddon. Your cryptic crosswords on a 13x13 grid are most welcome. Please send me more.

Members are reminded that copies of the minutes of committee meetings are available for anyone who would like to read them, on the members' page of our website and on the office noticeboard.

Safeguarding Policy

The committee has drawn up a Safeguarding Policy for York U3A. If you would like to see a copy, please go to our website or pick one up from the office.

Report from Groups Coordinator

Group membership A reminder to all renewing members and group leaders that all groups should be re-formed for the beginning of September. We have an obligation to ensure that new members can have the opportunity to join groups of their choice, and we want to avoid groups becoming cliques. Take the opportunity at the beginning of a new U3A year to consider doing something different as well as or instead of those groups you have been attending for some time.

Thanks to group leaders

As the U3A year draws to a close, I would like to express my thanks for all the dedication and commitment from Group Leaders for their contributions to leading the U3A for yet another year. And thanks also to all you group members who enjoy and benefit from the groups and contribute to the vitality that is York U3A. I look forward to supporting you all through another year.

Office keys If you are resigning as Group Leader and have got U3A office keys, please will you return them to the office and sign to show that you have returned them. If you have a replacement leader, he/she will have to formally sign out the keys as well.

Groups in August

The Meeting House is not closed this August so meetings can continue in the Fell and Woolman Rooms.

U3A Choir

We start again on Wednesday 25th September 2019 at 2pm til 3.30 pm in the Holgate Methodist Church Hall (disabled access available). We sing a variety of styles from the popular classic through to Shows and musicals, sometimes in unison, sometimes in 2, 3, or 4 parts. There is no audition. All that is required is an interest in music and singing (some of us can read music, some can't). Our aim is to make sure that all our choir members can share in the enjoyment of singing together. We put on informal concerts around Christmas and Easter under our musical director Stephen Lusty and accompanist Nick Morrice. Come along and try a couple of weeks without obligation to join. So, find out from conductor Stephen on 07887428479 or secretary Monica on 01904 702620 or email choir@yorku3a.com.

Alison Holmes Groups' Co-ordinator

The Early Days of Cinema

In this dizzy world of Netflix and block-buster movies, we often forget the amazing richness of the early films, and the stars of the silent screen: Conrad Veidt, Mary Pickford or Douglas Fairbanks. We see films up to c.1936 (so some talkies) and have explored the work of some of the greatest directors of the 20th century: Dreyer, Murnau, and Abel Gance. There is so much more to this era than comic shorts. There is a brief introduction to each film, and the opportunity to discuss afterwards.

Leader: Richard Beaton email: earlycinema@yorku3a.com

Venue: Fell Room at 2.00pm on the second Monday of each month, starting on September 9th.

Scrabble

Social Play

8 August and 12 September at Bishopthorpe Village Hall
Play begins at 1.45 p.m.

Club Play

22 August at 2 Westfield Road, Haxby.
Please phone Chris Phipps on 01904 764688, if wishing to attend.
Play starts at 1.45 p.m.

26 September at St Sampson's Centre, Church Street, near Shambles Market.

Please contact Bernard on 01904 629027, if wishing to attend and for final confirmation.

Play commences at 1.45 p.m.

For any other queries please ring me on the number above.

Bernard Ellis

Hearing Problems

Having read Anna Baldwin's article about members who have difficulty hearing during Group sessions, led me to wonder how many of those who might reply "yes" to Anna have had a hearing test in recent months. Simply increasing the volume is not always the answer. I spent about 18 months in denial and trying to convince myself that I didn't have a problem before I booked a hearing test. You can either ask your GP for a referral to Audiology at the hospital or use one of the free tests offered by Boots, Specsavers etc. The resulting graph will show if you have some hearing loss and which range of sounds you are missing.

As a result of wearing my new hearing aids I am now able to enjoy Groups again and am enjoying sounds that I had missed for a while – bird song particularly while outdoors - and have turned down the volume on my TV by several clicks, something my neighbours probably appreciate!

Modern digital hearing aids are adjusted to your needs, are feather-light and barely visible, especially if you wear your hair a little longer over the top of your ears! Even friends and family have not noticed.

So, be honest with yourself and book a test – after all, if you were struggling to read, you would go to an Optician!

Member No 1883

Trial to improve U3A Groups experience for those with hearing difficulties

In the Autumn we will have the chance to trial some equipment that we hope will make for a better experience for those with hearing difficulties who attend Groups. This will be primarily for meetings in the Friends rooms and will be looking at improving the experience in both discussion and presentation style Groups.

We would like to run this trial with members who are already experiencing hearing issues at groups they attend. If you would be able and willing to attend such a trial session, possibly late September or October, please get in touch with Lorrae Atkins on web@yorku3a.com or 07967 128 321 to register your interest and days available, and we will endeavour to fix a session convenient to the majority.

Lorrae Atkins and Alison Holmes

Changes to the York U3A Website

From 6th August you will see a new look to our website - www.yorku3a.com. This will coincide with the issue of the 2019/20 Groups Booklet posted to renewing members. This change has come about to keep up with the latest security of sites and take advantage of the specific design and function of a product used by many other U3As around the country.

The website continues to exist, and be maintained, for both prospective and current members. You will no longer need a password for access, since all of the information is public, which follows our recent changes to ensure we exclude personal information of members, from our website and newsletters.

For those of you who view newsletters online, this will still be available on the new site's Welcome screen, and you will be emailed as normal to say that a new version has been loaded.

I've tried to incorporate all of the information on the current site, as well as make use of the specific layout that the new site offers.

Do have a browse and get in touch if you have any comments or questions to web@yorku3a.com.

Lorrae Atkins (*Webmaster*)

Using Equipment

The diary for booking equipment will be available when the office reopens after the initial tranche of renewals have been completed. This year it will be on Monday 12 August.

Every group using the equipment will need to have a person responsible for setting it up and putting it away correctly. This will normally be the group leader but may be another member of the group. It is essential that all leads, etc., are put away in the correct box to avoid inconvenience to other users.

Before booking any equipment, the responsible person must fill in their contact details on the forms provided at the front of the diary. You are advised to fill in the diary yourself. Please do not telephone the office and ask the volunteers to do it for you!

If you are planning on using a piece of equipment for the first time you must contact me first so I can make sure you know how to use it correctly. If you are starting a new group, contact me in good time, preferably before announcing the start date of your group.

If you experience any problems with the equipment, send me an email with brief details.

Paul Howarth Technical Co-ordinator Technical @yorku3a.com

Armchair Travellers

The new Armchair Travellers book group is intended for anyone interested in travel literature that falls into the genres of 'Travelogues' or 'Autobiography'. It is hoped that the reading of such books would give us insight to the lives and experiences of those who have either travelled to or settled in other lands. With a few laughs along the way, we may find deeper insights into places and cultures once briefly visited or longed for.

Group members would be required to read one book a month for the months we meet and will hopefully be able to suggest their own titles for subsequent meetings by the end of the 2nd meeting, though this is not compulsory.

Members will be responsible for buying their copies of each book. I will give full information as to where they can be bought at the absolute cheapest prices.

Group Leader: **David Mcloughlin-Tasker**

Contact phone: 07915266220 01904 399611

Group Co-ordinator: Morag McLoughlin

Contact phone 07970783194 01904 399611

Contact email: armchairtravellers@yorku3a.com

Venue: Fell Room

10 til 12 noon 2nd Thursdays (not December)

Start date: 12th September 2019 End date: 11th June 2020

Cost: £1 per session Accessibility: 

Exploring the Bible SEX OR MONEY?

It is often claimed that the Bible has more to say about money than about sex, though it tends to be the sex that grabs the headlines. The Exploring the Bible Group are going to put this assertion to the test as we tackle both topics in our sessions next 'term', starting with Sex (obviously) in the Garden Room on Monday 2nd September at 10.00, and moving on to Money. After exploring these two themes we'll be looking for other topics to carry us through to Easter, 2020.

The topics covered by this group are decided by the members, so our first item of business on Monday 2nd September will be to determine the other topics for the coming year. To help members choose, they will be given a list of topics done during the last four years. They are:

People: James the brother of Jesus, Judas, the Patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, Ishmael, Jacob, Esau and Joseph) as presented by Jonathan Sacks), Women of the Old Testament from Abishag to Zipporah

Jesus: The Birth of Jesus, The Resurrection of Jesus, Versions of Jesus

Books/extracts: The Acts of the Apostles, John's gospel, Mark's gospel, Ruth; 1 Corinthians 12-14 (speaking in tongues), Luke 15:11–32 (The Prodigal Son), Jeremiah 7.22 (a case study in translation)

Topics: Angels, Parables, Resurrections (people raised from the dead by healers including Jesus)

Overview: Old Testament, New Testament

So much done, yet still so much to explore! If you wish you hadn't missed it all, check out our website at

<https://sites.google.com/site/u3ayorkexploringthebible/>

Peter Wells

Secretary of YORK U3A

Upcoming Vacancy

Under the York U3A constitution, members may serve for no more than six years on the York U3A Committee. In the autumn, Jean Haywood will have completed six years as Secretary and a replacement will need to be elected at the AGM in October 2019.

The Secretary's role involves mainly handling communications from the Third Age Trust (the national office), dealing with incoming emails in the secretary@yorku3a.com inbox, preparing the agenda for and taking the minutes of committee meetings, and making all necessary preparations for the AGM and taking the minutes of the meeting. The Secretary does not deal with the setting up and running of groups or with the membership database.

If you think that you might be interested in taking on this role, please email Jean at secretary@yorku3a.com.



Summer School

Live – Laugh – Learn

5th – 8th August 2019

The HawkHills, Easingwold

www.thehawkhills.com

Have you started thinking about what you'll be up to next summer? Our 2017 Summer School at the HawkHills Conference Centre was such a huge success, we're offering you the opportunity to join us at our 2019 Residential Event

The HawkHills is the perfect place to run our Summer School

Set off the A19 south of Easingwold and set within a 240-acre estate, the venue boasts well-appointed conference facilities and a reputation for first class cuisine as well as a cosy bar, relaxing lounge and conservatory areas. The modern accessible accommodation block provides comfortable, hotel style double en-suite bedrooms with all amenities, and the magnificent landscaped gardens open out onto woods with waymarked walks.

Course Topics to choose from	Landscape Painting	Festivals & Creative Tourism
	Literature	Climate Change
	Art History	Philosophy
	Magic Tricks & Skills	Jewelry Making

There'll be an optional sing-along before dinner.

Experience not necessary

Costs for our 3-night top class residential Summer School

Full Board Delegate £380

Day Delegate £190

****We are pleased to offer this year's event at the same price as last time****

More information including preliminary course details are available on yahru3a.co.uk.

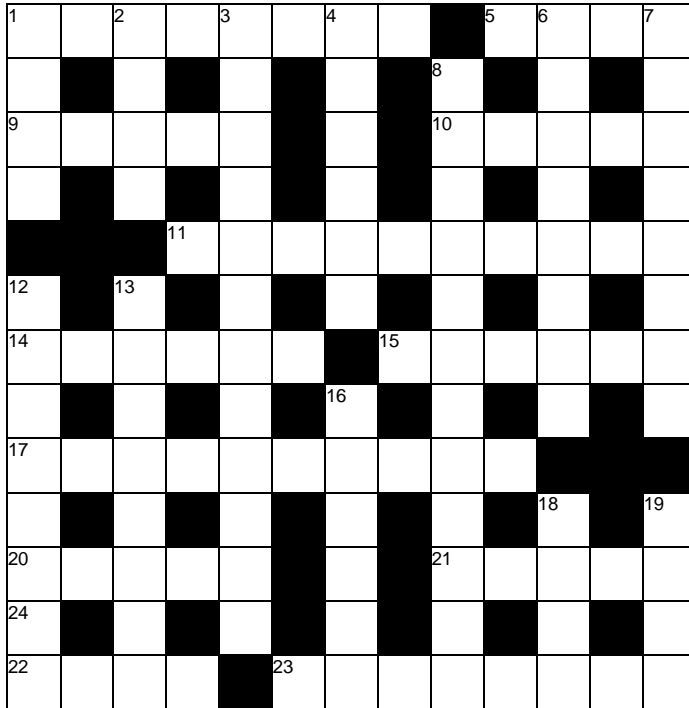
Booking can be made NOW!

Follow the links to events then Summer School 2019

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 U3 A members from across the region and beyond

Crossword by Mike Heddon



Across

- 1 This will definitely be.(8) 5 Sounds like bridge of magnitude.(4)
 9 End product of a machine.(5) 10 Accounts check.(5)
 11 Convertible into money,(10) 14 Required the bread to be
 pummelled, so to speak.(6) 15 Multi-directional Jewish sect.(6)
 17 Sketch a vest type and tighten.(10) 20 Prohibit this man from
 playing this instrument.(5) 21 Rashly unconsidered.(5)
 22 Did Adam eat her pudding?(4) 23 Direct the flock.(8)

Down

- 1 Create a breeze.(4) 2 H₂O in a quart.(4) 3 Introspection? On the
 contrary.(12) 4 Musical mystery of Sir Edward?(6) 6 Owing
 gratitude or obligation.(8) 7 End points.(8) 8 Loyal to a cause over
 vessel.(12) 12 Non consumable.(8) 13 A sort of prisoner.(8)
 16 Historic enemy? Knickers!(6)

Solution on page 15

York U3A Committee

David Maughan Brown

Jean Haywood:

Sheila Wilson:

*Brian Frodsham:

Eve Birch

Chris Sykes

Sandra Mason

Alison Holmes

John Powderley:

Lorrae Atkins

Paul Howarth:

Peter Jarman/ Anna Baldwin:

*Jennie Pugsley

**co-opted on to Committee*

Chairman

Secretary

Treasurer

Regional Representative

Office Co-ordinator

Volunteer Co-ordinator

Membership & Communications

Groups Co-ordinator

Newsletter Editor

Website

IT and Audio visual

Joint Talks Secretaries

Travel

Contacting the Committee

Messages can be left at the office

or using the following e-mail

addresses: chair@yorku3a.com

secretary@yorku3a.com

treasurer@yorku3a.com

office@yorku3a.com

vols@yorku3a.com

newsletter@yorku3a.com

web@yorku3a.com

membership@yorku3a.com

talks@yorku3a.com

technical@yorku3a.com

communications@yorku3a.com

groups@yorku3a.com

travel@yorku3a.com

Office Opening Hours are 10-12 on Mondays, Tuesdays,

Thursdays and Fridays. Closed Wednesdays

Groups cannot operate in the building on Bank holidays.

Fell and Woolman Room Closure

These rooms are NOT accessible when the Friends' Meeting House is closed.

Visiting the Members Pages on the website

From our website www.yorku3a.com you will need the York U3A password "1234" to enter the Members' Pages.

Alternatively, as a member, you can use the address

www.yorku3a.com/members1234

YORK U3A SATURDAY MORNING TALKS

Our Saturday morning talks start with Coffee/tea from 9.30am Talks start at 10:30 am. **Please bring your current membership card to gain entry to this talk**

Entry for members: £1.50, members' guests £3.00. The full list of Saturday Morning Meetings can now be referenced on the members' pages of our website, yorku3a.com/members-saturday-meetings

Talks cited below will be in the Central Methodist Church, St. Saviourgate with refreshments from 9.30 in the adjoining Hall.

September 14

Inspiration, Education, Conservation

The Yorkshire Arboretum celebrates 40 years

John Grimshaw, Arboretum Director will give a talk on running the Yorkshire Arboretum next to Castle Howard for over five years. There have been many improvements to its plantings, footpaths, and cafe.

Recently we have been clearing the lake of invasive weed and replanting its borders. We have even added the Arboretum to Venues for Weddings

October 12th

Callum Roberts, Professor of Marine Conservation

Department of Environment and Geography

University of York

Coral reefs and the future of the world

Solution to crossword on page 13

Across

1 Whatever 5 Size 9 Fruit 10 Audit 11 Commutable 14 Needed 15 Essene 17 Drawstring 20 Banjo 21 Hasty 22 Eves 23 Shepherd

Down

1 Waft 2 Aqua 3 Extroversion 4 Enigma 6 Indebted 7 Extremes
8 Partisanship 12 Inedible 13 Detainee 16 French 18 Isle 19 Eyed

York Travel Group

IMPORTANT NOTICE

DUE TO THE ONGOING WORKS, TO THE FLOOD DEFENCES BY THE ENVIRONMENT AGENCY, THE USUAL PICK UP POINT AT MEMORIAL GARDENS CANNOT BE USED. THESE WORKS MAY CONTINUE UNTIL NOVEMBER. THE COACH WILL NOW PICK UP AT THE WAR MEMORIAL AT THE TOP OF STATION RISE NEAR TO THE GRAND HOTEL. MEMBERS ARE REQUESTED TO BE ON TIME AS COACHES ARE NOT ALLOWED TO WAIT.

TRAVEL GROUP VISIT TO HEREFORD

JUNE 23RD – 27TH

We left York on a sunny morning full of anticipation for the varied programme of visits planned by Hilary and Margaret. We were so fortunate to have Irwin as our coach driver: endlessly courteous, he coped skilfully with tortuous entrances to National Trust properties and always had ready a fund of interesting details about the area through which we travelled.

Appleby Park Hotel, where we stopped for coffee, had an expanse of grass where we could stretch our legs and try to identify some wildflowers.

Our next stop was at Bridgnorth where we boarded a steam train on the Severn Valley Railway to Kidderminster. We were all of the right age to be taken back in time as we experienced the sounds and smells of steam travel. We passed a safari park and many eager photographers jostled for window-space, but I did manage to glimpse an elephant's legs. Almost instantly we looked right and there was an incredible sight, fields of scarlet poppies, grown for their seed.

At our destination, The Three Counties Hotel, we hastened to get ourselves and our luggage out of the steady rain. Those who chose the soup course at our very welcome evening meal enjoyed it greatly, cheese, onion and cider, combining ingredients widely produced in Herefordshire.

To see the Mappa Mundi at such close range, must be for many, the highlight of our tour. The largest known medieval map, it was inscribed on vellum around 1300. It is described as a spatial, temporal and spiritual map, showing Jerusalem at the centre of the world. York is one of the 420 cities and towns recorded.

The precious collection of books from the 12th century onwards, is housed in the Cathedral's original chained library, established in 1611 – the chains, rods and locks are still intact. The library houses one of four surviving copies of Magna Carta revised by Henry III in 1217, a copy of Wycliffe's Bible, the first complete translation from Latin into Middle English, completed in 1395; and a copy of the Nuremburg Chronicle. William Caxton, who became the first printer in England, commenced his education at Hereford Cathedral.

During the afternoon we visited a National Trust property, The Weir Garden, which overlooks the River Wye, and was developed as a pleasure ground for promenading, fishing and boating in the 1920s. The weather was now so sunny that shade was sought – and ice creams were very welcome!

The rain had returned on Tuesday, when we visited Ledbury. Irwin was able to drop us adjacent to Church St., where several of "the 10 best things", were sited. There was a wealth of information from the 16th century onwards, and some of the group would certainly like to pay a return visit, in the future.

In the afternoon, with showers persisting, we drove to Whitchurch for a cruise on the River Wye. Our coach then took us to the viewpoint at Symonds Yat. Even though it wasn't clear enough to see seven counties, it was still a grand view. An R.S.P.B. member had set up a telescope so that a peregrine in a nearby escarpment could be clearly viewed. Close to the muddy path, a solitary orchid was in flower – two unexpected delights.

Wednesday was a lovely June day which began with a visit to Monkland Cheese Dairy. We were made very welcome and were given a very clear account and demonstration of the processes involved in making a variety of cheeses. Samples were tasted – and a range of produce was then purchased – satisfaction guaranteed!

Our next stop was Ludlow. The finest timber-framed building is the Feathers Hotel, and in Broad St. you can see Georgian buildings. The castle dominates the centre of the town.

The afternoon was spent at Berrington Hall, a Georgian estate which has remained largely unaltered, containing an extremely rare example of a curved garden wall, designed by ‘Capability’ Brown. In 2016 a court dress was auctioned at Christie’s. It was made of cream ribbed silk brocade, embroidered with coloured silks and gold thread. It is described as a ‘court mantua’ and would only be worn three times! The dress was reconstructed from ten pieces in 2018 at Berrington. The fabric and the rich embroidery seemed as new – we were so privileged to view the incredible craftsmanship of Huguenot weavers.

Thursday was sunny and warm as the friendly, helpful hotel staff lined up to wave “goodbye”! Our first stop was Elgar’s birthplace, where we heard an interesting talk about the importance of his very early life in rural surroundings and how that influenced his musical career.

Shockingly, the cottage had been broken into, during the early hours, and as the police were looking for forensic evidence, the staff were visibly distressed. No one knew the extent of the damage, or whether irreplaceable memorabilia had been stolen. We were very subdued as we stood in the peaceful cottage garden – looking at the splintered front door.

We broke our homeward journey at Lichfield, where we could visit the cathedral, find lunch – and stroll for a while in the nearby park; before leaving for York at 3pm. The visit must have taken so much careful preparation. Each day had a variety of activities; the timetable was so well-planned that no time was wasted. New things were learnt every day and there were so many rich experiences. Thank you very much, Hilary and Margaret, for such an enriching visit.

Anna Child

Visit to the Baltic States, 1st- 10th June 2019



The plan for this trip was that it would start in Lithuania, the southernmost of the three Baltic States, continue north to Latvia, the central state and end in Estonia the northernmost before the

return journey home. Thus, after a coach trip and two flights, we were in Vilnius, capital of Lithuania, and ready for night's sleep before our tour. As I started writing I realised that it is intended largely for people who weren't there, and I also felt that there was little point in simply making a catalogue of sights seen and experiences shared. I therefore offer notes on a few of the many sights we enjoyed together with some abiding impressions of the indomitable spirit of the peoples of all of the Baltic States and their determination to rebuild after years of oppression by German and Soviet occupying forces.

We started, next day, with a guided walking tour of the bright, open and clean streets of central Vilnius with its delicately coloured houses and civic buildings, with churches tucked in every corner and with open-air cafes and restaurants on tree-lined main streets and down every side street. On past the Dawn Gate and the Street of Literature we walked towards the "independent republic" of Uzupis which was founded by artists who just wanted happy and care-free lives. Here, difficulties are resolved over a drink or two at the Barliament and there is a "law" against just being miserable!

On a more sombre note there was evidence, everywhere, some tangible some not, of military occupation by Nazi Germany and then by

the Soviet Union with their regimes of elimination of national culture, identity and national heritage. We paused, just for a few moments, in a pretty area with a children's play park and were enjoying this in the warm sunshine until our guide said "there was once a street here which ran down between two ghettos where Jewish people were interned before deportation". For Lithuania, indeed for the three Baltic States, the experience of occupation has not slipped into history but is within living memory. Importantly there is a fierce resolve to overcome the horrors of occupation, decline and neglect and to restore every aspect of national heritage, culture, religion, language and identity. Civic determination to restore nationhood after occupation was a recurring feature of our later experiences in Latvia and Estonia.

After a visit, next day, to the lakeside castle of Trakai we returned for some free time before preparing for next day's journey to Riga, capital of Latvia. We stopped en route at the Hill of Crosses where thousands of crosses were placed by Christians and members of other faiths as signs of belief. As part of religious suppression during occupation they were removed daily by the Soviets only to be stealthily replaced overnight by those determined to uphold their faith.

Riga seemed a busier, more commercial city with architecture of German and Swedish character and the tougher nature of a sea port. Latvia was occupied by Nazi Germany from 1941 where Riga played a harrowingly significant role in the transportation of Jewish people to labour and death camps, and then by the Soviets until 1989/90. Again, the pride in national identity was exemplified by the reconstruction of neglected or destroyed buildings in their original Latvian style. The following day consisted of a Riga city canal trip, a visit to the cathedral and a lovely organ recital, (including "Now thank we all our God" if memory serves). The Holocaust museum and shrine was chilling, harrowing and terrifying all at the same time. Jewish people from Lithuania, Poland and many German cities were sent to ghettos in Riga before being sent to labour or death camps. On our last day in Riga this was a cold reminder of how real this period still is to Latvia.

The next day we set off for Tallinn, the capital city of Estonia. On the way, whilst still in Latvia, we visited a Top-Secret Soviet Bunker.

Clearly, it was no longer secret, although parts of it were still tantalisingly off-limits to visitors. This fortress of 2000 square metres was constructed 9 metres, (nearly 30 ft), underground beneath a thick, radiation-resistant lead shield to conceal and protect some of the Soviet political and state elite in the event of a nuclear attack by the West and enable them to survive for at least 3 months. Our guide, a young lady in Soviet army uniform assumed the military role very convincingly and hosted the Soviet army lunch very enthusiastically! There's a picture of us below in the bunker happy in the knowledge that we will be free to leave after the tour!

We arrived in Tallinn ready for our walking tour of the city the following day. The city is Nordic with architecture influenced by Finland, Sweden and Denmark and with the old town being built on the higher ground with narrow, cobbled streets and very old churches. The rise of Estonia from the shackles of occupation by Nazi Germany and then by the Soviets to independence in 1991 is a stirring story.

Our last day in Tallinn started with a tour of the 13th century Dominican monastery in the old town guided by the bishop, no less, and followed by an afternoon of free time to enjoy a last walk down the cobbled streets and a coffee before packing in preparation for our morning departure for home.

I didn't think that these notes would go like this when I started writing and I did receive several warnings about writing too much. It would, however, have been unfair to have said merely that we visited Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia and saw sights about which you can read all too easily on Google and so I make no apology.

On behalf of all of the U3A travellers who were lucky enough to go on this trip it is a pleasure to thank Lis, (and Nev), for all the planning and organization they did on our behalf, and for their daily guiding and shepherding of our party, to make it the success it undoubtedly was.

Brian J. Gill
2/7/2019

Visit to St Peter's Church and the National Glass Centre, Sunderland

Thursday October 24th, 2019

Departures:

Fulford Main Street opposite Pavilion Hotel)	8.30am
Station Rise	8.45am
corner of Middlethorpe Grove with Tadcaster Rd.	9.00am.

We arrive in Monkwearmouth approx. 11.00am and there will be time to visit St Peter's Church which was part of the original Monkwearmouth - Jarrow Priory where Benedict Biscop introduced glass making. He hired French glaziers to make the windows for the church. Close by is the National Glass Centre where we will gather at 12.34pm. The cafés at the church and the Glass Centre offer coffees and lunches. There will be a guided tour of the galleries and you can walk on the glass roof and look down into the centre. After a demonstration of glass blowing and frameworking there will be tea/coffee and a scone before we leave for home.

We will leave at 4.00pm arriving in York approx. 6.00pm

Cost including coach, tour and gratuities is £18.00pp

Organiser Maureen Barter 01904 628598

(Mobile for use on the day only 07432793641)

Booking Jennie Pugsley 01904 440909.

Booking Form
Visit to St Peter's Church
and the National Glass Centre, Sunderland
Thursday October 24th, 2019

Please complete LEGIBLY

Please reserve. place(s) at £18.00per person.

I/we enclose a cheque for £ payable to York U3A Travel

I/we will join the coach at (please circle as appropriate):

Fulford opposite Pavilion Hotel	8.30am
Station Rise	8.45am
Middlethorpe Grove corner of Tadcaster Rd	9.00am

Members Names	
Membership Number(s)	
Address	
Telephone Number(s)	
E mail address	
Emergency Contact Name & Tel No	

If the trip is fully booked, you will be contacted and put on a waiting list.

If a place becomes available, you will be contacted again.

Please send booking form and cheque to: Jennie Pugsley, 2 Church
Close, Wheldrake, York, YO19 6DP in an envelope marked

SUNDERLAND..... uktravel@yorku3a.com



Upstream view of Lendal bridge