

Ripon & District U3A Newsletter

July 2026

Chairman's Report

There is no Chairman's Report this month.

Dates for your diary:

Hello Everyone

Welcome to July's newsletter.

As I write the sun is shining and the mercury is expected to soar into the mid to late 30 degrees breaking temperature records along the way. At least that is predicted for the S.E. and S.W. of England and S. Wales. And so, if you are lucky enough to be planning some time away in these parts over the next few days, enjoy yourself but take extra care too.



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As we embrace the summer months, Ripon u3a, in common with many other organisations, will be making some alterations to its usual schedule and so, if you are sitting comfortably with a refreshing cup of something to hand, I'll begin...

Firstly, unfortunately there will be no monthly meeting next month because Ripon Rugby Club is closed for re-decoration during the last week in July.

Secondly, there will be no monthly meeting towards the end of August. There is a possibility that we can re-arrange our date to Monday, 3rd August.

If this is possible we will, of course, send out more details nearer the time.

This seems like a good opportunity to thank Joyce Walmsley, our Speaker Secretary, for all her patience and hard work.

And finally, there will be no monthly meeting in September. It will be replaced by our annual 'Spotlight' event at Allhallowgate Methodist Church Hall on Thursday, September 3rd. More details to follow.

It only remains to wish you a very happy, healthy summer in the company of friends and family. I hope you find lots of opportunities over the coming weeks to live, laugh and learn.

Janet Sutton Vice-Chair, Ripon u3a

Thursday September 3rd 2026 - Spotlight on Ripon & District u3a event.

A chance for Members as well as the public to come along to explore the activities that are available within our u3a.

More details to follow about volunteers needed etc, keep your eye out for details.

Note from the Treasurer

A transfer was made on the 12th May to the Ripon u3a account for £10. This is very unusual as there is no name or details to the transfer.

If it was you, please contact me on slcsg1@msn.com and let me know what it was for.

Thank you. Stephanie Clark (treasurer)

Science for All



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For our next Science Group meeting on **Monday 13 July**, 2pm Sharow Village Hall,
We have – Molly Doyle & David Eagleson from Northumberland University
on **Space & Space Law**.

I hope this will be well supported as Margaret Bushell had to make numerous emails to arrange this. Also, their travel costs are expected to be over £100. David Swann has volunteered to collect them from Thirsk Station & provide them with lunch.

Then on **Tuesday 14 July** it is the visit to Allerton Park Waste Recovery Plant. I will remind members booked on this trip nearer the time.

Margaret B has also been busy arranging the programme until the end of the year and I have sent group members the latest programme (Version 6).

On 8th June Stuart Ward gave an interesting talk on what is required to safely go deep sea diving. He covered all aspects from the rigid diving suits with limited movement & vision via scuba diving & the mixture of gases used to the later re-breathing apparatus. With this system exhaled air is not discharged into the water but the CO₂ content filtered out & oxygen bled into the re-breathed “air”. He also showed beautiful photographs of diving the Bikini Atoll. Particularly interesting was the wreck of the USS Saratoga, sunk when the USA was experimenting with the effects on shipping of exploding nuclear bombs.

For further information or to contact me see the Ripon & District U3A website.

Keith Surman

Book Readers

Members take it in turns to choose a title and lead the discussion for a given month on a rota basis. There is no restriction on genre. Not everyone agrees on what constitutes *a good read*, which makes for some very lively discussions!



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The group currently meets on 2nd Thursdays at Wakeman's Café but in view of our increased numbers in regular attendance, we will be moving from there in July to the Ripon Inn. From then on there will be capacity for one or two more members. Anyone interested should get in touch with Val Mason, either personally, at a general meeting or via Ripon and District website.

Val Mason will be leading in July with ***The Poisonwood Bible*** by *Barbara Kingsolver*. The next three titles are: *The Offing* by Benjamin Myers, *Grey Bees* by Andrey Kurkov and *Hitler, Stalin, Mum and Dad* by Daniel Finkelstein.

Singing for Fun



This friendly group of enthusiastic singers meets at Allhallowgate Church Hall on the second Friday of the month at 11.00 am. The session lasts for a good hour and is mainly unison singing but with the occasional short harmony sections. No experience is necessary – just a willingness to have a go! There is a small cost of £2 per session to cover the room hire fee and photocopying.

Local History

There is no Local History meeting in June as we traditionally go out on visits to historical sites this month. We are going out on Thursday 25th June to Aldborough Roman Town and Ripon Town Hall this year.

Boroughbridge is a historic market town in North Yorkshire, 9 miles from Ripon, with a rich past defined by its strategic position on the River Ure and the Great North Road. Its origins trace back to Roman times, and it has played a prominent role in national events, including a major medieval battle in 1322 on and around the bridge over the Ure.



The Rugby Club is situated on Mallorie Park Drive, Ripon HG4 2QD. It has its own car park, and the clubhouse and all of its facilities are on level ground. Club Steward Sam will ensure that the tea/filter coffee/cool water and biscuits will be flowing from our time of arrival - as well as during a short interval part-way through the talk. The cost of unlimited refreshments is currently

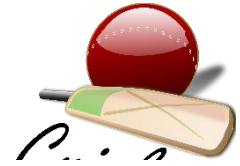
only £2 a person – which we pay to our hosts at the Rugby Club.

Guests are welcome to come along to one of our meetings, for which there will be a further payment of £2 - which goes towards the hire of the clubhouse, and any speaker expenses. To attend any subsequent meetings a guest must also be a member of Ripon u3a.

if you would like any more details, or clarification, our contact information can be found on the Ripon u3a website under the 'Groups' heading on the opening page.

Walking Cricket

We have had quite a busy time over the last few weeks. We were asked to demonstrate our skills by playing a match against a team from Knaresborough during the Ripon Cricket 'Catch The Spirit' Festival at the end of May. The crowd watching was no more than 1 man and his dog but, we did have the Lord Mayor come over to show his skill at batting. He is quite busy and will not be joining us, yet! We won the match.



On 9th June we had a team from Holyport Cricket Club join us for a game having travelled up from near Maidenhead for a tour of our region. They were also playing games against Harrogate and Knaresborough. I had been contacted out of the blue last November. The rain held off sufficiently for us to complete our game which we won. They very much appreciated our hospitality and it turned out to be a very enjoyable event.

We are still on the lookout for new members. It is a mixed group of ladies and men and we play with the aim of enjoying ourselves, having a bit of banter and a little bit of competitiveness as with all sport. You do not have to have played cricket before, or maybe not played since school days but you are welcome to give it a try.

Please contact Roger Rose via the Ripon u3a website.

Walking Group

Here is the list of walks for July. You will notice that no walk is listed for week commencing 20th July. I have not had an offer of a walk for that week.

However, there are three interesting walks available, and we hope to see you on at least one of them! If you would like to try out a walk before joining the walking group, please contact the leader, Janice, whose details are on the website.

Wednesday 8th July

Linda M will lead a 7.5m linear walk from East Witton to Masham via Ellingstring and Fearby. Meet at the bus stop in Masham to catch the 10.15am no 159 bus which will have left Ripon at 9.45am heading to Richmond. Please allow time for parking - recommended near



[Click Here](#) for the full list of walks and details.

Masham recreation ground and walk up to the bus stop and toilets. Lifts from Ripon probably available. Please bring refreshments for 2 stops - elevenses and lunch.

Monday 13th July



Janice S will lead a 4½+ mile walk from North Stainley, following the river Ure via Sleningford Mill and West Tanfield and heading back on footpaths and a minor road. Meet in North Stainley at 10 am, outside the village hall. Park considerately on nearby residential roads. Bring refreshments for one stop.

Tuesday 28th July

Kath Beeken will lead a 6+ mile walk from West Tanfield to Ripon, via Sleningford caravan site, North Stainley and Ripon Parks area, including a visit to High Batts Nature Reserve. Meet at Ripon Bus Station to take the 09.45am 159 bus to West Tanfield. Bring refreshments for 2 stops, elevenses and lunch. Good paths and tracks.



Is a £20 bottle of wine twice as good as a £10 bottle?

Are older wines always better than younger wines?

Should you choose the house wine in a restaurant?

How do you pick a bottle from the supermarket shelf?

These questions — and many more — are explored every month in a relaxed and convivial atmosphere at the **Ripon & District U3A Wine Appreciation Group**.

When & Where

We meet on **Wednesday afternoons from 2pm–4pm**, every month of the year.

The Group has been running since the establishment of the Ripon & District branch of U3A and continues to thrive.

There are currently **two groups**, each limited to **10 members** — a number we've found ideal to ensure:

- Everyone has the opportunity to contribute
- Discussion remains lively and inclusive
- The atmosphere stays relaxed and informal

Our members range from:

- "I know what I like" enthusiasts
 - Curious learners keen to build knowledge
 - Avid collectors
 - Those who simply enjoy two hours of tasting and conversation
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What We Do

Each session has a **specific focus**. For example, we are currently exploring the wines of **Chile** — examining different regions, producers and styles.

Wines are sourced predominantly from independent wine merchants to ensure:

- A wide range of regions
- Different producers and winemaking styles
- A variety of price points

To enable forward planning, there is a **£15 monthly subscription**, payable whether or not you attend that month.

Vacancies

While membership has remained fairly constant over the past 10 years, the natural changes within U3A mean that from time-to-time spaces become available.

We currently have **three vacancies in Group 2**, which meets on the **second Wednesday of each month**.

If you are interested in joining, please feel free to call:

John – 07539 579176

We look forward to welcoming new members who enjoy tasting, discussing, and discovering wine in good company. 🍷

Climate Change and Wine



Climate change is already having a major impact on wine production. Severe frosts and hailstorms have caused significant damage in several wine regions in the USA and France. After several years of declining harvests, growers were hoping for a better season, but many now face yet another reduction in crop size.

A warmer-than-average winter across the Northern Hemisphere led to an early spring, causing vines to bud earlier than usual. Unfortunately, this was followed by severe frosts that damaged or destroyed many of the young shoots. Before the grapes can even be harvested, growers still face months of risks from hail, drought, extreme heat, flooding, wildfires and smoke taint. It is no surprise that climate change sceptics find few supporters among the world's wine producers.

While this may sound gloomy, the wine industry has always been innovative and adaptable. Growers and winemakers are already finding ways to respond to these challenges.

Grape Selection

Choosing the right grape variety has always been important when planting a vineyard. Some grapes, such as Pinot Noir and Chardonnay, perform best in cooler climates with longer growing seasons. Others, such as Syrah (Shiraz), are remarkably adaptable and can produce excellent wines in both warm and cool regions. Varieties like Grenache are particularly well suited to hot, dry conditions and can tolerate water shortages.

Vineyard Management

The way a vineyard is managed is becoming increasingly important. One key factor is aspect – the direction the vineyard faces. This affects how much sunlight the vines receive, which influences ripeness, alcohol levels and flavour development. Traditionally, vineyards in the Northern Hemisphere were often planted on south- or south-east-facing slopes to maximise sunlight. As temperatures rise, however, growers are increasingly choosing cooler north-facing sites.

Canopy Management

Growers can also use the vine's leaves, known as the canopy, to control how much sunlight reaches the grapes. Careful canopy management can help protect fruit from excessive heat and sunburn.

Altitude

Another response to rising temperatures is to plant vineyards at higher altitudes, where conditions are naturally cooler. This is possible in some regions more than others. Spain, for example, has many river valleys with steep slopes that allow vineyards to be planted at higher elevations. Bordeaux, by contrast, lies close to sea level and has far fewer opportunities to move uphill.

All of this may or may not be interesting, but over the past few months the Wine Appreciation Group has explored these issues in the most enjoyable way possible – by tasting wines from Chile and Spain and seeing for ourselves how winemakers are adapting to the challenges of climate change. If anyone wishes to join us, we have 3 vacancies on the Second Wednesday of each month just contact me via the Ripon & District U3A website.



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This Month's Bio is our Secretary Glenys Bailey

I was born and brought up in Lancashire, and my happy place has always been Burnley Football Club, where I remain a loyal season ticket holder.

In 1972, my husband Frank changed his job and we and our three children took the plunge and moved to Zambia, living there for eight years. During that time, we both became actively involved in amateur theatre, which provided many memorable experiences and friendships.

Returning to England in 1981, we built our home in Burnley, where we lived until moving to North Stainley in 2004.

My professional career was in health and social care. I worked as a Mental Health Nurse, Mental Health Social Worker and later as a Team Manager for Adult Social Care in Ripon. It was a rewarding career that allowed me to support people through some of the most challenging periods of their lives.



Frank and I joined Ripon and District u3a when it was first established and have enjoyed being part of the organisation ever since. Today, I remain actively involved in several roles. Alongside Jane Mansell, I co-lead the Walking Netball Group, and with Ruth Rymer I help lead the Garden Group.

In addition to my involvement with YAHR, I currently serve as Secretary of Ripon and District u3a. I am also the Sports Coordinator for the National u3a Festival, which will be held in York from 1–3 July 2026.

Being part of u3a has enabled me to enjoy new experiences, stay active and meet many wonderful people, and I look forward to continuing my involvement for many years to come.

Deadline for July Newsletter

Please can I have all copy for the August Newsletter no later than the 21st July.

Thank you

If you are lucky enough to be getting away any time soon, happy holidays all, and if not, I hope you have a good summer.

Editor

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