

Ripon and District U3A Newsletter

September 2026



Chairman's Report

The end of August beckons ... Marking the end of the so-called Summer Holidays (and a break for grandparents) ... The next obvious break (in no time at all) will be Christmas ... And then your Committee will need to be thinking about the end of the u3a year (in May) - when we know we will be looking seriously at recruiting new Committee members. Our Constitution requires some existing members and key post holders - including me - to step down. I really hope some of you will read this and be tempted to see it as an opportunity for you, and to act on it. You are, of course, most welcome to attend any of our Committee meetings (generally the fourth Friday morning of the month) to check if it "might be for you". At least, give it some thought.

In the meantime, we are keen to strengthen our efforts to minimise any discrimination in our u3a and to make us welcoming to, and accessible for, everyone. We would like to appoint an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Champion. Again, if anyone is interested in this new role, please let us know. Whilst it would be an opportunity to be co-opted to the Committee now, this is not essential.

If you are coming to our Spotlight event in early September, I will be on the joint Photography and Psychology table ... And I will try and answer any questions you might have.

John Thompson

Dates for your diary:

September Monthly Meeting Monday 28th September

This will take the form of a welcome meeting for members who have joined us in the last year.

At our usual venue in the Rugby Club at 2pm. Ample free parking.

There will be committee members talking about groups, publicity, finance etc.

Also attending will be some longstanding members who are useful to chat to and pick their brains.

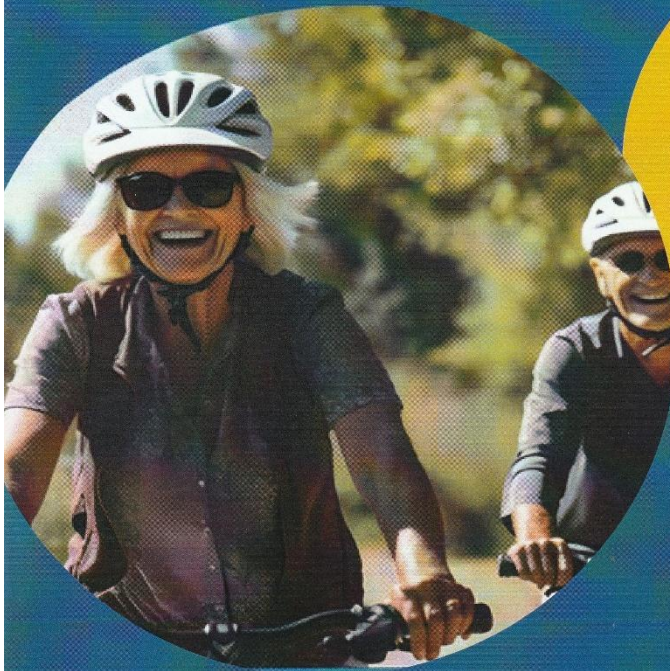
Come along, meet each other and some of the committee, ask questions, make suggestions and enjoy delicious cakes from Wakemans.

Looking forward to seeing you there
Meg Wilcox, Membership Secretary



SPOTLIGHT ON RIPON u3a

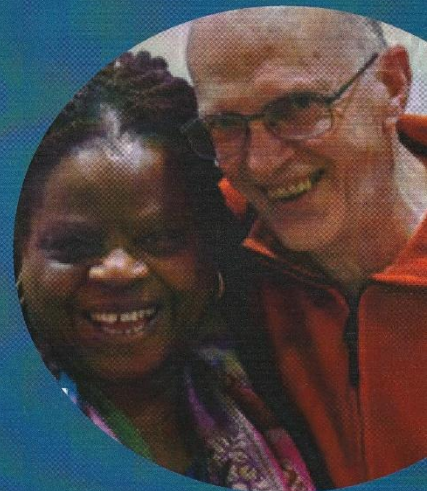
Discover what Ripon u3a has to offer you.
We have over 50 groups to choose from including
art, history, games, exercise, languages,
literature, music, science and lots more as you will
find on our website



All welcome
for a cuppa
and a chat.

LEARN
LAUGH
LIVE

Thursday 3rd SEPTEMBER 2026
1:00 pm to 3:30 pm
ALLHALLOWGATE CHURCH HALL,
RIPON



u3a

RIPON AND DISTRICT. u3asite.uk

U3A. Scribblers

Every 2nd and 4th Tuesday 10-12am
at The Wakeman Cafe

Join us to write, talk, drink coffee, laugh and listen

Have a great summer and store up those writing
Stimuli. Bring them along to put pen to paper.

First meeting September 8th. See you there

Contact. riponu3asite.org

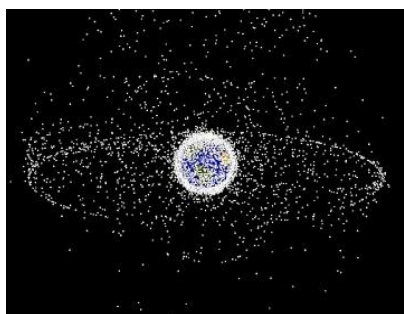
Pickleball – A lovely montage of the PICKLEBALL Group from Tony Green – thank you.



Science for All Group

S4A members will recognise most of this article, which would have appeared in last month's Newsletter if I had sent it to the correct email address.

Best laid plans of.....1: Shortly before the start time of Monday's meeting Joan Hainsworth and Steve Roberts discovered Sharow Village Hall was without power and it was unlikely to be restored before 4.30pm. Fortunately, David Swann had collected Molly and David, our speakers, from Thirsk and Kate and David were giving them lunch. Molly and David agreed that if they could print off some handouts, they would do their best. Denise and Steve Roberts with Yvonne Holmes then organised refreshments.

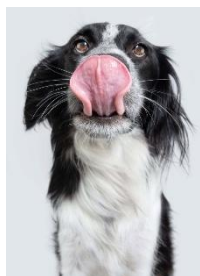


We learnt that space starts at the Karman Line, 100km above the earth. Above this line the atmosphere is too thin for aircraft wings to develop lift. No nation owns space and there are international agreements about its use. The nation that launches an item into space is responsible for that item, and if necessary, its return to earth. Space debris is a problem. It is proposed that when the International Space Station returns to earth it will be guided to Point Nemo. This is a remote spot in the South Pacific Ocean, but this is causing environmental concern and is a potential hazard to marine life.

..... of mice and men.....2: Despite much communication between Margaret Bushell and Laura at Allerton Park, when Ian Macvane and the other members on the visit arrived, Allerton were unaware of the visit because Laura had left the company. However, all was sorted and members "enjoyed" a smelly but interesting tour.



Since then, Margaret Bushell has received an apology for the mix up from Allerton Park and contact details for the new visits organiser, a Nicola Nundy.



Our next meeting, Sharow Village Hall 2pm 14 September, will be a talk by

Karen Coombes on Medical Detection Dogs - the way a dog's keen sense of smell can aid detection of human ailments.

Keith

Art Workshops



The Art Workshops Group will resume meeting from Wednesday 16th September.

We comprise a peer group who meet at St Wilfred's Community Centre to paint and draw together.

We use a variety of different media, based on individual preference, but all work on the same prearranged subject each session.

Group members are encouraged to make subject suggestions and ideally introduce their subject.

Members provide their own tools and materials, although group members do share and swap products.

Dates for the first autumn half term are 16/9, 23/9, 30/9, 7/10 and 14/10. All meetings are 9:30am – 12:30pm

Anyone interested in joining the group should make contact via the website.

Book Readers

It is testimony to the group's enthusiasm that despite the intolerable heat on 13th August, we had almost a full house at our meeting to discuss *The Offing* by Benjamin Myers. We had a really interesting discussion following Sandra's lead and Wendy's research.

The finishing touches have now been put on our recommended reading list for people who would like to read more but are unsure about where to start. If this interests you, come along to see me at Spotlight to collect one or contact me via the website and I can email it.

At the time of writing, we could take another member before the waiting list is reopened.

Next month's novel is *Grey Bees* by Andrey Kurkov - a translation from Russian, set in the *grey* zone of Donbas between Russian and Ukrainian positions.



Local History Group



After our summer break we will gather again at Ripon rugby Club on Thursday **September 24th** when **Mike Collins** will present

‘An Historical Tour of Boroughbridge – On Slides’.

Boroughbridge is an historic market town in North Yorkshire, 9 miles from Ripon. It has 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 river 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 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.

In October **Chris Tapster**, a military history speaker and living history re-enactor, based in Harrogate, will give a presentation without slides, which focuses on the role of **45 Commando Royal Marines** during the 1982 Falklands War, appearing in authentic period uniform with original equipment and artefacts. He is a very entertaining speaker!



Walking Group

Here we are again with another list of walks for September. If you wish to join the Walking Group or try one of the walks before you decide, please contact the Walking Group Leader who will give you the information you need.

Last month's hot weather was trying - I'm sure we are all hoping for some good walking weather for September

Thursday 10th September

Meg M will lead a 7 mile walk starting at the canal basin towards Littlethorpe and Bishop Monkton, returning along the canal and river to Ripon. Meet at the Canal Basin at 10.00am, and bring refreshments for a coffee stop, with the option of lunch in Ripon on return.

Please contact Meg if you want to do this walk

Wednesday 16th September

Linda M will lead a 6½ mile circular walk from the Grassington YD car park. An undulating walk with a few stiles, taking in Thorpe, Linton and Threshfield.

Meet at 10.15am at the car park, which is a pay and display £6 for all day - we should try and car-share I think. Please bring refreshments for two stops, elevenses and lunch.

Please contact Linda if you want to do this walk

Wednesday 23rd September

Jane Willis will lead a walk from Ripon Cathedral to Ripley Castle. Meet at 9.30am at the Cathedral, or join walk at 10.00am at Hell Wath Cottage. The walk is 8 or 9 miles depending where you choose to start. Good paths, no stiles. Bring refreshments for two stops, elevenses and lunch. There is a cafe at Ripley if required. Return to Ripon by 36 bus.

Please contact Jane if you intend to do this walk and please let her know where you prefer to start.



Tuesday 29th September

Janice S will lead a 4½ mile walk from Ripley. Come and see the Great Wall of Clint. An amazing lockdown project. The route is hilly in places, with some stiles. Meet at Ripley Cross at 10am with refreshments for 1 stop. Return to Ripon on 36 bus.

Please contact Janice if you intend to join this walk



Mahjong Group



I am pleased to report that our new Mahjong group is up and running and we usually have a fairly consistent number of regulars so usually manage to have 3 tables of either 3 or 4 players per table. However, we are still growing and would certainly welcome more people to join us whether you're already an experienced player or a complete beginner. You'll receive a warm welcome and will soon know your puns and chows and the joy of calling out Mahjong when that last tile suddenly appears to complete your hand.

We have a very enjoyable afternoon that only costs £3 per person and is a great way to meet new people, socialise and keep your mind sharp. We meet on the 1st and 3rd Friday of the month at St Wilfrid's Community Hall in the Jervaulx Room at 1.30 pm and finish at 3.30 pm. Bring your own refreshments if desired.

Contact details are on the Ripon u3a website under the groups heading.
Alison Sutcliffe (Group Leader)

Cate McQueen - From the Cathedral door to a view over the canal



I first encountered Ripon in the 1950s, when I was considerably smaller, had fewer opinions, a bossy big sister and a rather fetching little coat. I recently found a picture of me with my family standing beside one of the side doors of Ripon cathedral. Little did I know then that one-day Ripon would be my home.

I came to live in Ripon, and later in the surrounding countryside, in 1975 as a young married woman. For many years Ripon was somewhere that I lived rather than somewhere with strong connections. I was busy with work and family and I had a long daily commute into the North East. It was only when I retired that I discovered an important truth: retirement gives you plenty of time but it doesn't always provide you with people nearby to spend it with.

Fortunately I found Ripon and District u3a.

It has given me much more than activities to fill the diary. It has introduced me to people that I might never otherwise have met, and to friendships based on shared interests, curiosity and the willingness to try something new. Literature and writing are particular passions of mine, but I have also discovered that one of the great pleasures of u3a is being persuaded to take an interest in things you hadn't previously realised you were interested in.

A couple of years ago, one of my new friends persuaded me – or perhaps rather cleverly maneuvered me into joining the committee. I have always enjoyed working as part of a team, so it has been a rewarding experience. I have taken responsibility for communications and marketing, which has meant learning about social media. I am now sufficiently familiar with Facebook to be dangerous, although I suspect that I still have some way to go before anyone would describe me as a digital expert. My daughters would think this idea particularly hilarious given my lack of technical know-how.

When I am not in France, which I regard as my second home, I try to get to as many monthly meetings as possible, usually to collect the refreshment money. Outside u3a my interests include gardening, architecture, interior design, fashion, live music, art appreciation, antiques (particularly French ones) as well as simply enjoying the company of family and friends and putting the world to rights.

Looking back at that photograph of the small girl outside the cathedral, I wonder what she would make of the life that brought her to live in Ripon in a house overlooking the canal. I suspect she would be both surprised and pleased but she would have no idea what Facebook was.

Deadline for the October Newsletter

Please can I have all copy for the October newsletter to me no later than the 21st September.

Thank you

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