

Newsletter February 2025

COMMITTEE

June Keeler Chair	Trevor Pitt Treasurer
Speaker Secretary	Andy Downs Groups Coordinator
Sue Mellish Membership Secretary	Sheila Simms Minutes Secretary

Chair's report

Welcome to February's newsletter, no snow this time!

As you know, Leyburn and District u3a AGM will be held on Friday May 16th of this year. Yes I know it's ages away but time seems to fly faster for me since retirement. Also, the planning of this important event in our calendar starts now. We are looking to fill roles of Membership secretary, Speaker Secretary and Groups Coordinator. Some of these roles are more demanding than others and you can probably guess which ones they are.

Susie Mellish, our fantastic membership secretary is resigning from her post after 3 years. She has kindly offered to fulfill her duties so that current members can renew their subscription and new members join. You will be hearing from her soon in the usual way so please complete your applications as quickly as possible before April.

We haven't had a specific Speaker secretary this year. Instead, the committee have suggested known speakers to myself and I have coordinated that information. The good news is that every month this year has a speaker booked already so if you're thinking of volunteering in this capacity half the job is done! It certainly is one of the least demanding roles and very enjoyable.

The Groups' Coordinator role is one of communication which can be done in a technical way or simply by phonecalls. Andy Downs has found that emails to convenors are a quick way of doing this and convenors have an immediate contact.

Some committee roles jog along in the background but are essential to the running of the current committee. I'm thinking of the website manager and the editor of this newsletter. They know who they are but do you? All roles, however, all play a vital part at committee meetings and without them Leyburn u3a may follow the demise of Richmond u3a, and we don't want that to happen do we?

So, rally the troops and get hunting for new members of our committee!

June

Monthly Meeting

ENCOUNTERS WITH GORILLAS

In **Encounters with Gorillas** Ann Barrowclough will share her magical experience of meeting mountain gorillas in their natural habitat in Uganda.

Join her on Friday 21 February to learn about this amazing experience and the tragic, and poignant story of the gorilla family and her visit to their home.

Doors open at 10.00 for 10.30 at Leyburn Arts and Community Centre, Richmond Road, Leyburn DL8 5DL. Visitors and new members are always welcome. Annual membership is £12 or £20 for two people at the same address, For details contact Sue Mellish Membership Secretary via website .

Reminder for Litter Picking on Feb 12th at 2.00pm. Meet at Melanie's house opposite the parish church, please bring your own gloves.

Now is the ideal time to get verges etc clean before the new growing season.

Many thanks.

Garden Group

After ten years of sterling work, Mary Sadler has retired as convenor of the Gardens group and handed the reins over to me, Paul Wildman. We started our year with the January meeting at the home of one of our members at which we pooled our ideas for our meetings for the rest of the year. For our February meeting we are going to look at the display of snowdrops and winter aconites at Redmire and Nappa Hall, with warming break for coffee at a pub in Carperby. We are meeting up at LACC on 11th February at 9.45am to car share or at Redmire Church at 10am.

We had planned to visit Braithwaites Garden centre for our March meeting, but there don't seem to be any public events there in March. Braithwaites have not replied to my enquiry about any public demonstrations in March or my request that they might organise something especially for our members. Any suggestions for an alternative outing at anytime in March would be very welcome.

Speaker report

'In the nuns' footsteps' - Sandy Carter

Marrick Priory was a C12th Benedictine nunnery and is an Outdoor Education centre for young people. Behind and above it is a paved walkway which is the original track to Marrick village where nuns would collect rents from local houses. This fact and many others were shared by Sandy during her presentation as Education Development officer at the priory.

Roger de Aske gave the priory and the church to the nuns and other lands totalling 400 acres. Once established it became the home to several of his daughters. four hundred years later Henry VIII's commissioners evicted Christabel Cowper, prioress, and sixteen nuns as part of the dissolution of the monasteries. Sir John Woodhall bought it in 1545 and became the wealthiest man in the dales. Ownership changed again in 1592 when Timothy Hutton of Marske bought it and later by the Blackburn family of Blackburn Hall.

Marrick Priory was once home to Britain's oldest hearse, built in 1828. It was found in the Georgian Hearse House in the 1960's in pieces and rebuilt. This early and vernacular horse-drawn vehicle is exceptionally rare and its provenance can be found in the registry records. Sandy shared many more interesting features accompanied by photos, for example, the medieval glass in the Aske chapel which now is an office window, the nun's tower, a knight on horseback in a niche and carvings on stone slabs. Also an interesting story that Isabella Beaufort, maid of honour to Katharine of Aragon was pursued by Henry VIII so much that she ran away from court to this priory to hide.

The Marrick Priory Experience now tells us that it has become an Outdoor Education centre for children within a 50 mile radius where they have opportunities to do a wide range of activities. The nun's tower, as mentioned earlier is used for abseiling, High Ropes, Archery, a climbing wall, orienteering, beck scrambling, canoeing, raft building, and caving at Crackpot are just some of these. An exciting experience for any city child!

Fundraising events are also held when the general public are invited to visit and consist of delicious lunches and afternoon teas of epic proportions. There's lots more information online about the history of the priory and how it functions now. Also Hilda Prescott's novel, *The Man on a Donkey*, tells the story of Marrick Priory in the days leading up to the seizure by the crown.

Bird Group

Next Meeting: Monday 10 th February 2024 Nosterfield Quarry Entrance Reserve just outside village at 10.00 am. New members are warmly welcomed.

ANCIENT GREECE GROUP

Convenor: Stuart Lennie

The Group will be 10 years old in October.

Ancient Greece is an extensive subject for study with plenty of scope for finding numerous topics of interest. If you would like to join our discussions, please come along to LACC on the first and last Fridays of the month at 10am. The next meetings will be on the 7th and 28th of February and on the 7th of March Do drop in for any of these sessions for a taster.

PS On a reassuring note, no previous knowledge of the Ancient Greeks is required if you wish to join the Group.

PPS Note the Elgin Marbles debate which rumbles on. Come and have your say as to whether they should be returned to Greece or not.

If you give us a try you will find how Ancient Greek culture has had a profound influence on the development of our modern democratic world and as a result has been called the cradle of Western civilisation. In our Group discussions we highlight Athens, the beating heart of Ancient Greece, playing such an influential and dramatic role in the birth of democracy, politics, philosophy, pottery, sculpture, architecture, art, medicine, literature and drama. All of this is played out against a background of mythology and religion.

Amongst the great figures that we feature in the Ancient Greek story include Plato and Aristotle (philosophers), Cleisthenes, Themistocles and Pericles (politicians), Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides (playwrights), Herodotus and Thucydides (historians) and Phidias (sculptor).

Leyburn & District u3a Laptop & Technology Group (Tech Group)

After the Christmas recess it was nice to welcome the u3a members who attended our first Tech Session of the year who presented with issues such as the following.

Downloading / Backing Up Photos

Many of us take photos using a Smart Phone, whether that be an iPhone or an Android one – which for anyone unfamiliar with what Android is, in short if your phone is not an Apple iPhone then it's Android regardless of the brand name. So you take lots of photos, but are these then just saved to your phone? What happens if you lose it or it stops working. You could lose them completely – but it's easy - when you know how, to ensure your precious memories are not lost. Depending on how your phone was set up, it might automatically be backing up (saving) your photos to 'the cloud' which in short means saving them to a remote server (storage system) such as Google Photos, somewhere in the country or the world. On the other hand it might not!! It might also be backing up some things you'd prefer not to have backed up.

If this topic has got you thinking, we can soon put your mind at ease and show you how to change settings etc. on your phone or tablet device. Don't wait until disaster strikes!!

Awash with Emails or Text Messages?

With so many things having to be done online, it's becoming more and more common to get multiple emails (or Texts) from things like placing an order or just making an enquiry, dealing with home/car/pet insurance, your phone company, the Council, doctors surgery and so on. The list is endless and so are the emails and texts. It's easy to start feeling overwhelmed especially if you're not sure how to delete them when no longer wanted or how to delete a

number of them in one easy go. If this sounds like you – pop along to the next Tech Session and we'll show you an easy way to stay in control.

Chromebooks...

Chromebooks seem to be something you either get on with straight away, or if you've come from using a regular laptop, then it might take a bit more getting used to. Whereas most laptops are based on Microsoft 'Windows' Operating Systems, Chromebooks are based on Google/Chrome and therefore don't come with the programmes / software to open documents or spreadsheets that you might be familiar with. Worry not, we can show you how to install software such as LibreOffice which is free to install and use and does pretty much everything that Microsoft Word, Excel and Publisher does. This can also be installed on laptops too and save you the yearly subscription charge for Microsoft 365. I've used LibreOffice for several years and can definitely recommend it.

Here to help you

The u3a Tech' Group aims to provide basic help and assistance in a safe, friendly and welcoming environment. The ethos of u3a is all about mutual learning and we look to give advice and information that helps the member to solve their own tech problem wherever possible, so that if a similar issue occurs again they know what to do and even be able to help someone else who has the same problem. Nothing beats that satisfying feeling of having solved a problem yourself – ok with the help of Google occasionally.

Feel free to email either myself (John), Christine or Sue if you'd like to attend or to be added to the meeting reminder email list.

Next Meeting...

We meet the third Monday of each month. **The next meeting is on Monday 17th February 2025.** Meetings take place 2pm – 4pm at Leyburn Arts & Community Centre. £2 per member which helps cover room hire. Coffee and Tea are available for a small charge of just £1. Non u3a Members can attend up to two sessions before deciding whether to take up u3a membership so feel free to bring a friend.

And finally!

If you are coming to a session, please bring your device and any connecting lead or charger **AND** most importantly have available **any password** related to it or to your query. We look forward to welcoming you.

Christine Price

John Sutton:

Sue Mellish: