



Swanland u3a Newsletter

Registered Charity No: 1078104

Learn, Laugh, Live.

No: 85. January 2025



A View From The Chair

I'm writing this piece in late November, the weather has suddenly become more wintry and we seem to be rushing headlong towards Christmas, which will have been and gone by the time you read this, so I hope that you had a good

festive season and that 2025 has begun and continues well for you.

Looking back, as always we had some really good Thursday afternoon talks including some excellent talks from our own members: John [redacted] talking about bread; Nigel [redacted] and Julian [redacted] performing a superb recital of violin and piano music; our Vice Chair Paul [redacted] on his experiences as a local authority housing officer.

The fact that these members were willing to do this demonstrates perfectly the whole ethos of the u3a – a communication of interests and enthusiasm so that we learn together. I'm sure there are other members who have a wealth of skills and enthusiasm and could share this on Thursdays and even use it as a catalyst to start new groups. We lost a couple of groups towards the end of last year, which is always going to happen as we are a dynamic organisation, changing according to what members want and even more, what they are prepared to offer, but it would be great if we found new groups to replace them.

Think about it. Your fellow members are a very welcoming audience!

We welcomed a number of new members in the autumn and we found a lot of interest in Swanland u3a when we had a stall at the N Ferriby village event showcasing all the local groups and activities available in the village and its surrounding area. We can all play a part in recruitment just by chatting about what we enjoy thanks to our u3a membership and by

inviting friends to sample our activities. If you're enjoying your u3a membership then do spread the news. The best method of recruitment is person to person and the best way to keep new members is to welcome them and their new ideas.

So good, positive u3a developments and more to come we hope. Let's all make sure we're playing a part in keeping Swanland u3a expanding and developing so that we can continue to enjoy it for many years to come.


And once again, Happy New Year!

John Godber Talk

Many of you were disappointed when John Godber had to cancel his talk in 2023 when he caught Covid. I'm delighted to let you know that he will be talking to us on 3 April 2025. As before, this will be an evening event and tickets will be made available shortly. I know some people have held on to their old tickets in anticipation of a new date, but you will not need them. It's much easier for us to start again from scratch.

We're extremely grateful to him for fitting us in and really looking forward to what promises to be a highlight of our u3a calendar.

QUIZ TIME

Who is this?	
Name this phrase.	
Which song title may be translated as "old long since?"	
What connects: Tinsel, Silent and Listen?	
<i>Answers on page 23</i>	



Swanland u3a News

THURSDAY PRESENTATIONS

Date	Subject	Speaker
16 th Jan 2025	The joys (or otherwise) of being a Genealogist	Anne Sherman
6 th Feb	True tales of the Wild West from Dinosaurs to Gunslingers	Tom Shay
20 th Feb	Members' event – details to be confirmed	
6 th March	Thornton le Dale Ukelele Strummers	John Scobie
20 th March	AGM	
3 rd April EVENING	<i>Title to be confirmed</i>	John Godber
17 th April	- "North Yorks Moors" or "Britain's Wild Flowers, True, False and unbelievable."	Colin Bradshaw
1 st May	Barrow to Baghdad and back again.	Philip Caine
15 th May	The trials and tribulations of a theatre producer.	Brian Daniels
St Barnabas Church, Main Street, Swanland 2pm to 3pm followed by tea, coffee, biscuits and a general chat.		

TECH TALK:

Passwords and your Internet Security

Did You Know?

The most popular passwords in the UK are:
password, qwerty (the first 6 letters on a keyboard) and 123456!

According to a news article more than 4.5 million people are still using
'password' as their password.

I don't know about you but passwords are the bane of my life. I have so many I just cannot keep track.

A few years ago, I started to receive several emails a day threatening my online security unless I paid a ransom in Bitcoin. Needless to say I didn't as I knew it was probably a scam, but they did know one of my passwords – which at that time I used on several sites. Would you believe the password was my grandmother's maiden name? That was not a good idea!

I later found out that one of the websites I used had been hacked and my log on details extracted from the database. It was a concerning time, but it did force me to change all my passwords.

Initially I used a mixture of numbers and special characters to replace letters in a word that I would remember. I also included a unique 2 or 3 letter code at the end so I would know if a specific site had been hacked. An example (don't ever use this) is: P@55w0Rdu3a = Passwordu3a.

I was always wary of using password suggestions and managers such as Google in case they were hacked or it either didn't save it or I could not access it for some reason. The National Cyber Security Centre does suggest we use these systems. I still copy the password onto a Word document on my PC (never my phone or tablet) until I know for sure it has saved it.

You can access your passwords via the settings on your browser (Internet Explorer, Chrome, FireFox, Edge, Safari etc.)

A safer option is to also use 2 step verification whenever possible, in addition to strong password (such as F@K*p3_Rjx4tjuq). If your password has been stolen or guessed this 2nd security system will send a code to your mobile phone or email for you to enter into the website you are trying to access. Some now may even ask for a fingerprint or facial recognition. If the websites you use offer this facility I would recommend you accept it.

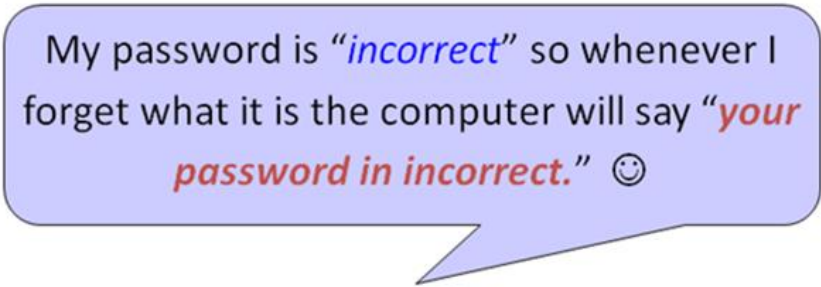
Technology is moving at a fast pace which we couldn't envision 20 or 30 years ago. It is tempting to say "I will be OK" or "I can't be bothered" or "I don't understand this" and not do anything about it. Allowing strangers the opportunity to access your online accounts or websites is a bit like leaving the door key under the mat or flowerpot. It just isn't safe. Some people around the world are trying to steal **your** money or identity. It is up to you and the companies you deal with to do everything we can to stop them.

Recommended reading:

National Cyber Security Centre:

<https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/collection/top-tips-for-staying-secure-online>

Anne



My password is "*incorrect*" so whenever I forget what it is the computer will say "*your password in incorrect.*" 😊

My Secret Life in Southport



In 1956, at the age of 16, I joined the Yorkshire Penny Bank as a junior clerk at the Accrington branch. None of my workmates at that time would have agreed that I was a natural for the role, and my modest O level would prove a poor preparation for costing up columns in pounds, shillings and pence.

Back in the mid 1950's branches operated on the minimum of staffing levels. The result was it was often necessary for our branch to provide others with relief staff. Holiday periods put the greatest pressure on the system. During Lancashire Wakes Weeks, when whole towns shut down and workers departed for the coast, it resulted in plenty of staff being available in one place while assistance was urgently needed in another.

One of the few advantages of being the most junior and expendable member of staff was that you were always the favourite to be sent out on relief. The bank, although not generous in salary, did provide accommodation for staff when they were away from home with all expenses paid for. As far as a teenage junior clerk was concerned this was a holiday with the slight inconvenience of work between 9 and 5.

I don't know if I ever had a proper holiday in the late 1950s but I was sent on relief to South Shore, Blackpool (right next to the Pleasure Beach) as well as to other seaside branches. The most memorable was Southport...

I relieved at Southport at least three times in those years, including a full fortnight with a weekend included. The branch operated on a staff of three: the Manager, who was a cheery, avuncular man, Miss Martland looked after me like a son, and Ronnie whose job I was relieving.

Relief duty at Southport was always a pleasure. My recollection is that the working day was short, as a result of which I took the opportunity to spend some time on my AIB studies while I was there.

Another plus was the accommodation provided for me. All these years later I'm not sure of the name of the hotel I stayed at but I think it was The

Manor. If you ever saw the film *Separate Tables* you'll get the idea: small and friendly with a resident clientele of retired ladies who were always interested in a young temporary visitor.

On one of my last visits to the hotel in my late impressionable teenage years, the scenario at dinnertime one evening was unexpectedly very different. Instead of elderly ladies, there were six of the most beautiful and beguiling young women I had ever seen in one place, along with six of the most robust young men you could imagine. During the course of the evening in the hotel's comfortable lounge, I introduced myself to Beauty and 'The Beef'. It turned out that at the weekend the television programme *Holiday Town Parade* was to take place at the Winter Gardens Pavilion. These twelve young people were the finalists in the Miss and Mr Great Britain competitions to be hosted by the show's presenter McDonald Hobley.

In the course of a chat to one of the male contestants staying at the hotel, he asked me my name. "Tony" I told him. "Oh" he said "so is mine. What's your surname?" "Rothwell" I replied. After a moment's stunned silence, he said "Well I never – so is mine!"

Tony very kindly provided me with a pass for the show and on the Saturday evening I found myself sitting front and centre, alongside the Mayor of Southport and other local dignitaries. As the event went out, each of the contestants dressed in swimwear parades on the cat walk in front of the judges. At least two of the young women smiled at me and one actually winked.



At the end of the evening Tony Rothwell was declared Mr Great Britain. As we applauded his success, the bigwig sitting beside me asked what my name was and how I came to know the contestants. All I said was "You'd never believe me if I told you."

Tony Rothwell, Mr Great Britain 1960
(*Health and Strength Journal* 5 May 1960)

Tony

A Short Story

THE DILEMMA

Stephanie had endured a terrible morning in her job as probation officer. She'd somehow managed to get all her worst clients in on one morning. When lunch time came, she heaved a sigh of relief that she could escape the office so as to get her head back into some order. She turned to a colleague, "I'm going out for my lunch today." Her colleague gave her a sympathetic look as she was aware how fraught Stephanie's morning had been.

Deciding it'd be nice to meet her friend, Bethan, Stephanie quickly dialled the number on her phone. She was disappointed when it directed her to leave a message. She hastily spoke into the phone, "I'm going out for lunch, so if you receive this message in the next few minutes, do you want to join me?"

Stephanie took her time in the ladies hoping her phone would ring, but eventually decided she'd have to make a move if she was to get anything to eat. As she was on her own, she wandered over to a shop that sold sandwiches. Their sandwiches were far better than a local sandwich bar. Once she'd made her purchases she wandered, rather forlornly over to a small garden where she'd sit and eat her food. She was glad it was a lovely sunny day so after eating she'd shut her eyes and have a few minutes relaxation.

Walking along in the garden she pulled up sharply to see somebody sat on her favourite bench. It wasn't the shock of seeing somebody there but more who it was. At first, she thought her eyes were deceiving her, as it looked like her friend, Bethan. Stephanie looked again, but it was Bethan. But who was that with her? She could see quite clearly it was a male. They were holding hands and looking at each other intently. But it wasn't Marcus, Bethan's husband. Stephanie's legs nearly gave way with shock. She'd never expected this of Bethan. What should she do? Try to creep

out without Bethan seeing her or should she tackle her about this. Marcus didn't deserve this as he was such a lovely husband.

Just at that moment Bethan looked up and saw Stephanie. Instead of looking shocked, she waved to Stephanie to go over. Stephanie didn't like what was happening. What could she say in this situation in front of this unknown bloke? Reluctantly, she walked over but was even more shocked when Bethan's face was beaming as she looked at Stephanie.

Before Stephanie could say her thoughts, Bethan quickly spoke, "Stephanie this is my brother, Chris."

"You don't have a brother," Stephanie snapped.

"I do. Don't you remember I told you I was adopted? I decided to research my birth family and I found I'd a brother. We decided to meet and here he is."

"Oh, that's great," Stephanie replied, as she sank slowly onto the bench with shock and was only glad, she hadn't opened her mouth.

**Susan
Creative Writing group**

Did You Know?

It deosn't mtttaer in waht oredr the ltteers in a wrod are, the olny iprmoetnt tihng is taht the frist and lsat ltteer is in the rghit pclae. The rset can be a toatl mses and you can sitll raed it wouthit a porbelm. Tihs is bcuseae the huamn mnid deos not raed ervey lteter by istlef, but the wrod as a wlohe.

Not strictly true but fun anyway – unless you are proofreading 😊
See page 23 for a translation.

For detailed information:

<https://www.mrc-cbu.cam.ac.uk/people/matt.davis/cmabridge/>

A Family History Story

It may surprise you on this side of the Pennines, where Lawrenson is a rare name that the Lawrensons were sufficiently thick on the ground in South Lancashire for two of them to marry each other, but that is what happened.

Henry Lawrenson, my 3x great grandfather, married Esther Lawrenson in December 1797. Henry was the third son of John Lawrenson and Margaret Hulgreaves, and Esther was the second daughter of another John Lawrenson and Ellen Seddon. The family lived in Whiston where almost every man and boy (and some of the women) was a coal miner. The first mention of coal mining in the Whiston area is as early as 1521, and the Whiston colliery, where Henry worked, called "Paradise", was built in 1802.



The Prescott Parish records always show the surname as L-a-w-r-e-n-s-o-n, but when all three couples, father Henry, son John, and son Henry and their wives, were married at St. Wilfrid's chapel in nearby Farnworth they are always shown as L-o-r-i-s-o-n. Since the family at that time were undoubtedly all illiterate, it would have been left to the parish clerk to decide what spelling to use. This variation in the spelling of our surname persisted at St. Wilfrid's from 1793 to 1822, probably the tenure of one parish clerk. Perhaps, he thought they pronounced it "Lorison" the first 'n' being (virtually) silent. St. Wilfrid's had better facilities for the wedding reception. Across the road was the Ring o' Bells dating back to at least 1714 and the fairs (called wakes) that were held there. An engraving of the time shows that the church was a more magical place for a wedding.

I was surprised, when tracing the birth of Henry's son Henry that the father had died before the son was born. How had that happened? He had been killed by fire in the Whiston mining disaster of 1806. There are 10 burials at Prescott bracketed together and the note in the parish records says: "*These Ten persons were killed by fire in a Coalpitt in Whiston.*" Disasters like this require a coroner's certificate of course, and I found one at the Lancashire

Record Office having searched on the National Archive: *“Inquisitions taken by Harvey Wright, gentleman, one of his Majesty’s Coroners for the said County since the time of the last Ormskirk Sessions in view of the several dead bodies on the days and at the places hereinafter mentioned”*. Alas there is no record of the depositions at the inquest only the coroner’s fee and expenses.

I had always worried that the unfortunates had been freelancing. Nowadays more and more newspapers have been published online. Newspaper accounts can replace lost coroners’ records. So, here is the account that appeared in the Lancaster Gazette.

“On Monday morning last an occurrence of a most melancholy nature took place at Whiston, near Prescott. As the workmen in a colliery belonging to Messrs. Moss & Co were employed in their usual occupation, the foul air unfortunately exploded, by which means ten of them were almost shivered to atoms, and one only, out of the number who were in the pit, escaped. The scene which presented itself to the surgeon, who descended with the hope of affording relief to the unhappy sufferers, was, beyond conception, horrible, and what compassion to the feelings of our readers must prevent us from attempting to describe. The fire issued from the mouth of the pit after the explosion, in flames of astonishing magnitude, presenting a most terrific appearance to the spectators. We are much concerned to find that several large families are, by this affecting catastrophe, deprived of the means of support.”

With the records of the Lancashire OPC Project, it was easy to research the families involved in the 1806 disaster. I found that there were killed in the accident, 4 adults, 2 young men (aged 20 and 17), and 4 children (aged 11, 11, 10 & the youngest 8. It wasn’t until 1842 that the Coal Mines Act forbade the employment of boys under 10. They left 4 widows, and 22 orphans.

Esther Lawrenson was pregnant when she was widowed, and she named her son Henry in memory of his late father. No member of my immediate family ever worked underground again (and the name ‘Henry’ has never

been used again in my branch of the family). Instead they became the engine driver's that operated the pit head winding gear. That lasted for the next three generations making it into a family business. My grandfather, James Ernest, was only 15 when the pit closed in 1890.

We are thankful for education. My father got a scholarship to Manchester Grammar School, and spent his evenings at home swatting to become a Member of the Institution of Electrical Engineers. I did things the easy way taking my degree at the newly formed University of Sussex.

Malcolm

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

Science and Technology Group



Last September the Science and Technology Group enjoyed an excellent visit to the Hornsea Lifeboat Station. We signed up for their “Fish and Ships Experience” which was really interesting and thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Sue, the station manager and crew member told us the story of Hornsea Inshore Rescue and answered our many questions before coxswain Carl demonstrated the kit he wears and the equipment needed for a mission.

After a first-rate fish and chips lunch provided by the nearby award-winning local restaurant (Whiteheads) we saw the lifeboat at close quarters and heard about the difficulties not only of launching it down the slipway but also managing its return, often in heavy seas.



The crew are all unpaid volunteers and receive no funding from the Government or the RNLI. Their bravery and dedication filled us with admiration.

Margaret

The Philosophy Group

Sessions usually begin with a member of the group offering a presentation, followed by discussion. Recent topics have included: John Rawls's '*Veil of Ignorance*', The Philosophy of Science, Plato's Republic, Consciousness, Hannah Arendt and Isaiah Berlin, Thomas Kuhn and The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, Atheist Philosophers and the Sea of Faith, The Philosophy of Education, Peter Singer and Effective Altruism. Some meetings have included thought experiments relevant to the presentation.

We would welcome new members to help us expand our range of topics and approaches to philosophy.

Epicurus may have had u3a members in mind when he wrote,

*'Don't neglect the study of philosophy when you are young,
nor weary of it when you are old.
No age is too early or too late for you to improve your mind.'*

Art Appreciation 3.

Are you interested in art and would you like to learn more about it?

We are a group of enthusiasts who meet in members' houses on the second Thursday morning of the month to discuss a wide variety of art subjects. Some members are fairly knowledgeable and others less so but we are all interested in learning more.

One month we each brought along a couple of pictures of paintings of horses and the variety was extraordinary. Another time it was paintings featuring picnics and they ranged from formal C17th portrayals to Impressionist to Cubist, to Modern. Sometimes one or two people will prepare a presentation on an artist of their choice but there is no compulsion to do so.

We usually show the pictures on a TV via a laptop. On other occasions we might watch a video and discuss it afterwards or go on a visit to local exhibitions, for example the Open Exhibition at the Ferens.

Discussion Group.

“What still needs to be done, and how, to improve the lot of women around the world”?

“Which of your teachers did you find most charismatic and inspiring, and why?”

“Can populism be defeated?”

“What ambitions are not yet satisfied, and what am I going to do about it?”

What do all four of these questions have in common? Over the course of the past few months, they have all been a **Question of the Week**, set by members of the Swanland u3a as questions to other members of the group. So, if anyone asks, *“what sort of things do you discuss at the Discussion Group?”* the answer is there. Anything to do with current affairs, and anything relating to our own experience of life – and the more diverse the views and the experiences, the better! There’s no risk of anyone being “cancelled” or “deplatformed” for expressing a particular view. (We communicate by email, not via social media.)

Apart from the Question of the Week, which is circulated each week to all group members by email, with members taking it in turns to pick a subject, we also **meet in person once a month (on the first Tuesday of each month)** at the Convenor’s home, where discussions may start with a particular subject but then go off at a tangent, as the fancy takes us – plus we also occasionally go out for a meal together, which means discussion may also continue whilst socialising (although it’s not obligatory!)

We are a very friendly group from a wide range of backgrounds – all of whom accept that there are no right or wrong answers – just varying viewpoints!

Does this sound like something you might enjoy? If so, contact our Convenor, and come along and dip a toe into the Swanland u3a Discussion Group. You’ll be very welcome.

Singing For Fun

Great news. Singing For Fun is to restart in January after a few months of closure. Kate [REDACTED] has volunteered to be the new convenor and her husband Gwyn has agreed to be the musician. He plays the guitar and is experienced in leading groups of singers.

The group will meet in Swanland Village Hall on the 4th Wednesday of the month from 2.15 to 3.45. Everyone is welcome. Kate hopes that past members will rejoin and that anyone who enjoys singing will also come along. You don't have to be able to read music, just be someone who enjoys Singing for Fun.



SPOTLIGHT ON GAMES



As the cold and wet winter weather draws in some of us want a warm and cosy atmosphere to socialise in. Playing card or other table games may seem boring to some but these games offer a chance to relax, chat, gently tax your brain cells and perhaps learn a new game. We have a number of such games on offer, some of which you may not know how to play.

This small guide will hopefully encourage you to try at least one this winter, although it is much easier to understand a game during play rather than reading about it.

Bridge is a bit like tiddlywinks or tennis – it can be played at any level. For those who play Partner Whist and can count to 40, Bridge is a natural progression. It is a game of 4 players and a battle between your side (the person opposite you) and the other side.



Very simply the idea is to bid the number of tricks you can make and then score by making the bid. By bidding higher than your opponents you become the DECLARER side and your bid becomes the CONTRACT. You score points depending on that Contract and the aim is to score more points than your opponents.

Bridge rules are very clear that other players must not criticize you for any mistakes made due to inexperience or loss of concentration. There are lots of helpful Accol Publications and no one minds if you use one as you play.

Canasta is a game for 2 to 6 people played with 2 packs of cards. Each card has a face value and a point value. You are dealt 11 or 13 cards depending on the number of players, and the remaining cards are called the stock. The aim is to make melds of a certain value and eventually a canasta. If you can't go then you take a card from the stock, put a card face up beside the stock to begin the discard pile, then the next person plays. This continues until a side has made a canasta and a player has used all their cards, then goes out. The score is taken and the game finishes when a side has reached 5,000 points. New players are welcome.



Cribbage or crib is a card game traditionally for 2 players that involves playing and grouping cards in combinations which gain points (usually 15, 31 or also pairs and runs). It can also be played by 3 or 4 people.



Cribbage was invented by John Suckling, an English poet and courtier in the 17th century. It is easy to learn the basics.

Mah-Jong is an ancient Chinese game and is NOT like the Mah-Jong game played on computers. This is totally different!

The game is similar to Rummy but uses tiles instead of cards. There are 3 suits each numbered 1-9 (Bamboo, Characters and Circles) and several



special tiles such as Dragons, Winds, Flowers and Seasons. Each player attempts to assemble four sets of tiles plus one 'pair'. The tile sets are named CHOW (a sequence of 3 tiles of the same suit), PUNG (3 of a kind), and KONG (4 of a kind).

Scrabble is a word game set out in a similar way to a Crossword played on a board that is divided into a 15x15 grid of squares. Some squares are



special as they can double or triple points on letters or a whole word that lands on or across it. Players score points by placing letter tiles forming words onto a game board. Each letter has its own value. Commonly used letters such as vowels are worth one point, while less common letters score higher, with Q and Z each worth 10 points.

There is a lot more to some of the games but this is a quick guide. It is recommended that you simply observe for a session or two if you have never played the game.

The following list will appear in each January issue of the newsletter.

Interest Group	Meeting Details
ARTS, CRAFTS and LITERATURE	
Art Appreciation (2 groups)	2 nd Thurs of the month 10am
	4 th Thurs of the month 2pm
Art – Hands On	The next meeting is after Easter but may be cancelled due to low numbers.
Book Group	4 th Thurs of the month. 7.30pm
Creative Writing	3 rd Wed of the month 10.00am

Literature (2 groups)	1 st Friday of month 2pm
	1 st Friday of month 2pm
Poetry Appreciation	2 nd Wed of month 2- 4pm
Play Reading	4 th Tues of the month 2pm
Wine Appreciation	3 rd Friday of the month 7pm
GAMES and SPORTS:	
Badminton	Most Fridays 2pm
Bridge	Most Mondays 2pm
Canasta (2 groups)	Wednesdays 10am OR Fridays 10am
Cribbage	2 nd & 4 th Tuesdays of the month 10am
Croquet	Every Friday. 2pm. (April to September)
Golf (experienced)	Contact Convenors
Mahjong	1 st & 3 rd Wednesdays of the month 2pm.
Scrabble	3 rd Tuesday of the month 2pm
Quiz	2 nd Monday of the month 7.30pm
LANGUAGES	
French Conversation (3 groups)	2 nd and 4 th Fridays of the month 2pm,
	1 st Wed of the month 10am
	2 nd Thurs of the month 2pm FULL

German	2 nd & 4 th Mondays of the month. 10am
Italian Self-Help	2 nd and 4 th Wednesdays of the month. 10am
Latin	4 th Thurs of the month. 10.30am
Latin Improvers	2 nd Thurs of the month 2pm
Spanish - Basic Conversational	2 nd and 4 th Thursdays of the month 2pm
Spanish Advanced Self-Help	Every two weeks 2pm
MISCELLANEOUS	
Discussion Group	1 st Tuesday of the month 10am
Local History	2 nd Wed of the month 1.45 pm
Luncheon Club	2 nd Tues of the month 12.00
Philosophy	4 th Monday in the month 2pm
Science & Technology	Contact Convenor
Supper Club	2 nd Sat of the month. The time is variable.
MUSIC, THEATRE and DANCING	
Choir	1 st & 3 rd Thursdays of the month. 3.30pm
English Country Dancing	2 nd and 4 th Tuesdays of the month 1.45pm
Guitar	Contact Convenor
Music Appreciation	1st Tues of the month 2pm
Singing for Fun	4th Wed of the month 2.15 to 3.45
Theatre Visits	Contact Convenor

OUTDOOR PURSUITS (also see Games & Sports)	
Gardening	4 th Tues of the month 10am
Walking Short	1 st & 3 rd Weds of the month 10.30am
Walking Longer	2 nd & 4 th Wednesdays of the month 9.45am
Wild Flower Walks	Contact Convenor (April to September)
Wild Swimming	Wednesdays, 10am Welton Waters

Sadly the following groups have closed:

- Bird Watching group
- Bridge (Thursdays) group
- Family History Group
- Outdoor sketching

COMMUNITY AND WIDER U3A NEWS



Membership of East Riding Leisure Centres

Did you know that u3a members can have a membership for less than an ordinary adult membership? You just need to show your u3a membership card. For more details see:

<https://www.eastringleisure.co.uk/join/> and

<https://www.eastringleisure.co.uk/group/>

The Yorkshire and Humber Region Summer School will take place on August 18th – 21st 2025. Details are not currently available but will be advertised on the website at: <https://yahru3a.uk/events/upcoming-events/> or email events@yahru3a.uk

Festival 24 Success.

The Third Age Trust Board meeting in August 2024 reviewed the success of the Festival at York University. *“Based on the feedback survey and comments at the time, the Festival was judged to have been a major success on many fronts showcasing a wide range of activities. Thanks were extended to all volunteers and staff involved in organising the event, and to the many members who led activities. Building on the momentum of the Festival it was agreed to promote a further festival in 2026, also at York University, with other regions encouraged to examine suitable locations and develop proposals for a further festival beyond 2026.”*



The u3a Brand Centre website has been updated and is much easier to use. You will be able to shop for the full range of u3a merchandise as you would shop online for anything else. No need to register, just order, pay and it will be on its way. Visit: <https://u3a-shop.co.uk/>

Flight in Spitfire



I had the pleasure of flying a Spitfire from Biggin Hill last September. It was a surprise 80th birthday present from my wife and son. I had seen a Spitfire on the ground at a Vintage Aircraft Show at Church Fenton late last year. Considering that the airplane is over 80 years old, it was amazingly sleek and the cockpit, controls and the layout looked very modern. I immediately fell in love with the plane. The representative, of the company exhibiting the Spitfire, was very friendly. He did not mind me climbing in to wonder at the controls and feel its historic significance. Flights on a two-seater version, with two sets of controls, were being offered at extortionate prices, but I took a leaflet anyway. Earlier this year, I met a good friend, who also had been to the Church Fenton display and was kind enough to show me a video of him flying the Spitfire. He said it was a memorable experience.

I flew from Biggin Hill which was the main base for the Spitfire squadron in WW2. The company was very professional and outlined the risks during the flight which were mid-air collision because we were flying in uncontrolled air space, engine failure and worse of all if the pilot became incapacitated! I flew with a parachute which should open automatically when I jumped off the plane if the emergency required abandoning the airplane. There was a D handle which you had to pull if the parachute did not open automatically! I made up my mind that, if it came to that, I would grab the D handle before I jumped!

The pilot who took me up was young aged under 30, and had been with the RAF. That immediately reassured me that the worst- case scenario, the pilot becoming incapacitated, was extremely remote. The pilots also have to pass a stringent medical every year. We took off and headed towards Leeds Castle and on the way there, I flew the Spitfire for 10 minutes.





Flying over the Kentish countryside, at a height of 2000 plus feet, was sheer delight on a beautiful sunny day. I just kept to the bearing I was given and made a turn or two and then corrected to be level again. I did the same with height, and went up and down then levelling out at the height we were flying. Considering the age of the Spitfire it is exceptionally manoeuvrable and you have to be very light on the controls. On the way back from Leeds Castle the pilot asked me if I wanted to do the Victory Roll – which is going straight up and a 360-degree turn. I said yes, so we did it and it was amazing so we did another one! That was the best part of the flight. I have to make it clear that I was not flying the Spitfire when we did the Victory Rolls.

I was in the air for half an hour and the whole experience was amazing, memorable and unforgettable. I would do it again if the cost was not so high.

Shahab

QUIZ ANSWERS

Who is this?		Paul Newman who was born on 26 January 1925
Name this phrase		Festive Season <i>(c's on festive)</i>
Which song title may be translated as "old long since?"	<p>Auld Lang Syne For more info: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Auld_Lang_Syne</p>	
What connects: Tinsel, Silent and Listen?	They are anagrams of each other.	
<p style="text-align: center;">Do you enjoy quizzes?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Then why not join our Quiz group on the 2nd Monday of the month Everyone is welcome.</p>		

Did You Know? Translation

It doesn't matter in what order the letters in a word are, the only important thing is that the first and last letter is in the right place. The rest can be a total mess and you can still read it without problem. This is because the human mind does not read every letter by itself, but every word as a whole.

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info@swanlandu3a.org.uk
chair@swanlandu3a.org.uk
memsec@swanlandu3a.org.uk

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Newsletter Deadline

The closing deadline for the submission of articles for the
May 2025 newsletter is:

1st April 2025

Send to: newseditor@swanlandu3a.org.uk