

Whitby Whaler  
June 2026



## Message from the Chair



Summer officially starts on 1st June according to meteorologists, though astronomically summer doesn't begin till the summer solstice on June 21st. However, with the recent heatwave at the end of May it seems that we are already well into the season, and apparently many places in the UK were hotter than most places in Spain. Seeing reports of lengthy queues at ferry ports makes me wonder why so many people want to rush abroad for holidays; personally, when it's hot and sunny there's nowhere else I'd rather be than Whitby, at least we usually get some sea breezes to temper the heat. Thinking of holidays, a good number of people have signed up for a u3a holiday in 2027; check in at the June coffee morning for details and to see if there are any places left. As mentioned in the previous newsletter, the u3a Festival is taking place from July 1st to 3rd; and our u3a Singers and walking Netball team will be taking part; see the article below for further details. A further reminder to check the members' Forum on our website ([www.whitby.u3asite.uk](http://www.whitby.u3asite.uk)) for articles for sale or for free and for information about non- u3a events of interest. Although our newsletter is mainly intended to give information about u3a activities, we are also including this month some information about non-u3a organisations and events which may be of interest to our members.

*Trevor Barrowcliffe*

## From the Membership Secretary

As our u3a Groups start to wind down for the summer my thoughts are turning to membership renewals. I will include a specific message about the procedures for this in the July newsletter.

In advance of that, I wish to let you know that I will be contacting everyone during June to check the personal details we hold for you for membership purposes are correct. This is to ensure our digital records are complete and accurate and compliant with Data Protection Law. It will be an easier task if this is separated out from the membership renewals which take place from 1 August onwards.

You will NOT need to respond if the details supplied to you are correct.

GIFT AID – I have written to many of you about this over the past couple of months and wish to thank those who have taken the trouble to reply.

There were quite a few people who did not reply, and I wonder if you might reconsider authorising the collection of Gift Aid if it is appropriate for you to do so. Only UK taxpayers can authorise this but as the tax threshold has been

frozen since April 2021 many people in receipt of increased Retirement Pensions are now finding they are paying some tax. Under the Gift Aid scheme, the Whitby Whaler u3a receives back 25p in every pound of your £20 membership fee – meaning a further very helpful amount of £5 per person is paid to us at no cost to yourself. If you are happy to agree to this, please let me know (or see me at the next Coffee Morning at the Rifle Club) and I will advise you of next steps.

Maureen Osborne [membersecwhitbywhaleru3a@gmail.com](mailto:membersecwhitbywhaleru3a@gmail.com) Tel: 07368534403

## Concert Outing

The next concert outing will be at the Glasshouse on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> October 7.30pm, when the Royal Northern Sinfonia will be playing the following programme: Grieg, Peer Gynt Suite; Saint-Saens, Cello Concerto (Soloist Sheku Kanneh-Mason); Sibelius, 3rd Symphony. Tickets are £40 and can be booked at the coffee morning on 20<sup>th</sup> June and at the subsequent coffee morning in July. If you can't make the coffee mornings but would like to reserve a ticket, please contact me on [twbarrowcliffe@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:twbarrowcliffe@yahoo.co.uk) or 01947 600963.

Trevor Barrowcliffe

## National u3a

In summer there will be a National u3a Festival taking place at York University – this will be a repeat of the successful first Festival held in 2024. It is a 3-day event from 1st to 3rd July and will feature workshops, music groups, talks, sports and performances. It appears that all the tickets are sold out, but there are some Festival Fringe events taking place online - check out their website [www.u3a.org.uk](http://www.u3a.org.uk) for details. Our u3a Singers will be performing on Thursday the 2<sup>nd</sup> July, as will the Walking Netball team, and there will be a coach provided; there may be a few places left on the coach so if you would like to go please contact me asap on [twbarrowcliffe@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:twbarrowcliffe@yahoo.co.uk) or 01947 600963. The National u3a also run regular online learning groups covering a wide variety of topics, check their website for details.

Trevor Barrowcliffe

## u3a Theatre Visits Group

SPARE SEATS - Cost includes transport. New members very welcome.

**MOULIN ROUGE** Sunderland Empire (Row E front stalls, 2 separate seats left) £120

Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2026 at 2.30pm

**THE ROCKY HORROR SHOW** Grand Opera House York (1 seat)

Friday 24<sup>th</sup> July at 5pm £75 Leaving Whitby 10.30am.

**ANNIE** Newcastle Theatre Royal (6 seats left). Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> August 2026, 2pm £70

**THE CAR MAN** Matthew Bourne (Music from CARMEN). Newcastle Theatre Royal £75 (9 seats left).

Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> September at 2pm. **WHITBY SPA PAVILION** - Chris Wales has offered our u3a members 40 discounted tickets for a show this summer. **THE GREAT BRITISH BAKE-OFF MUSICAL**. THURSDAY 25<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2026 at 7.30pm £15 each (normally £18 + booking fee). Please get in touch or see me at the Coffee mornings or at any other u3a events. All tickets are now ready to collect. We have 5 spare seats available. Cash only. Please get in touch or see me at the Coffee mornings or at any other u3a events.

Thank you for your support. Rose Corner 07790896062. [rosiecorner@gmail.com](mailto:rosiecorner@gmail.com)

## Recorder Group

Where has the time gone? The recorder group has continued to flourish, and it has been a delight to welcome new members. Although the weekly sessions finish on 9th June, four members will be attending a Play Day in July in York. Huge thanks to all members who have turned up each week and tackled everything thrown at them! Your commitment, musicality and humour make this group work effortlessly! We will recommence on 15th September, looking forward to seeing you all again.

## 3rd Age Stagers

We'd like to thank everyone that came to watch our 12<sup>th</sup> show 'A Cocktail of Suspicion' we hope you enjoyed it as much as we did staging it. Our shows are very much a team effort with everyone playing their part in pulling the show together contributing props, costumes, set and supporting each other through rehearsals. We like to include music and sound effects to add to the production and we really need a new volunteer to help with this. You don't need experience

or even come every week but be a bit tech savvy or press a few buttons on a keyboard would help- please get in touch to find out more or chat through anything.

We start rehearsals again in September for our next show with a Christmas theme to be staged in January.

Contact Jan 07949264022

## Days out

I would like to Thank everyone who has joined me on my trips this u3a year. All my trips are now full

The trip to Harrogate Knit & Stitch is full too. If you put your name down for this trip & paid for a ticket into the Knit & Stitch. The balance for the bus is now due it can be paid at any coffee morning between

June & September. It will be £10

I have enjoyed arranging the trips & my days out with you all. I am going to continue to do the Trips when the new u3a term starts in September

You can contact me on [paulineshepherd63@hotmail.com](mailto:paulineshepherd63@hotmail.com) or 07780717222

## Gardening Group

Apologies for the short entry. Our next trip is on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June to Haywood House. Pick up points: Sainsbury's 9 am, New Bridge 9.05, Prospect Hill 9.10, Harrison's Garage 9.15, Castle Park 9.20, Salmon Leap 9.25. Enjoy the weather. See you on the day.

## Monthly Ceilidh/Barn Dance



On Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> June we are holding our final dance of the year in the Royal Hotel Ballroom at 2pm, cost £3. Thank you to everyone who has come along so far and danced throughout the afternoons. Also thank you to our lovely band and team of helpers, without which, it would not be possible to run such events. We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible for the final dance. Don't worry if you haven't got a partner, everyone is very friendly and all instruction is given. So, slip on those dancing shoes and join in.

*Gaynor Wilkin*

## TOAST (The Out and About Socialising Together Group)

Trying out a new venue!

Twelve members of the TOAST group enjoyed a variety of Italian dishes on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> May at Cosa Nostra in Whitby.

Thank you to Glen for organising another very pleasant evening out!



The next TOAST Coffee Morning will be held on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2026 at 10.00am in the Penny Hedge.

## Walking Cricket

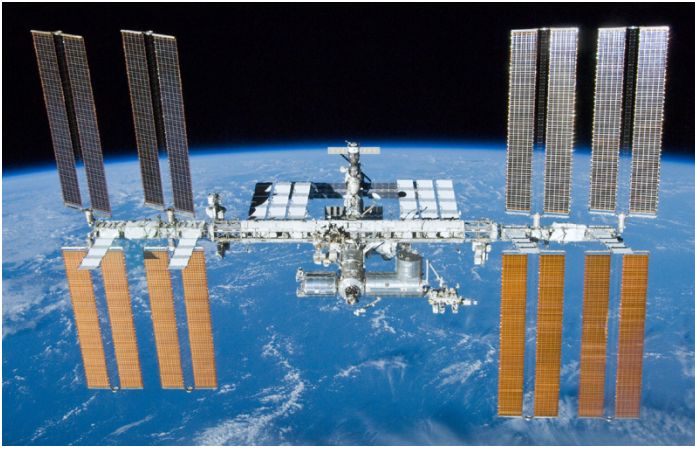
The u3a group of Walking Cricketers is all set to resume activities over the summer months. Sessions are led by experienced cricket coach, Mike Stones, and are open to all, both men and women. The aim is to have fun above all. Each session lasts about one hour and is not too strenuous at all. Sessions take place at Whitby Cricket Club ( Upgang Lane, Whitby, next to Whitby Town FC) on the outfield of the cricket ground. Equipment (bats and tennis balls) is provided, and toilets are at hand in the cricket pavilion. If you would like to try it out, please contact Mike Stones on 0773 465 1128. The cost is only £1 per session, and sessions are made up of easy practices for cricket skills of batting, bowling and fielding along with a short match of walking cricket. For further information, simply ring Mike. Sessions are held weekly on Wednesdays 11.15-12.15 beginning on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> June.



## History Group

Eastside Community Centre, Thursdays (weekly), 2 – 4 pm.

Our sessions in May saw the completion of this year's programme. The two talks dealt with the widely different topics of the history of the 'space race' (Rick H. '*A history of our exploration of the solar system*') to the role of Egypt's royal women in the Ancient Egyptian empire (Prof. Joann Fletcher '*Egypt's royal women: from queens to female pharaohs*'). Rick's talk traced space exploration from Sputnik and Yuri Gagarin through the competitive and cooperative stages of the 'race' to the modern competitive and commercialised developments (NASA is hosting a press conference on May 26<sup>th</sup> on aspirations to build a human base on the moon).



*The International Space Station – a cooperative venture in space*

Joann's talk gave an excellent, engaging and learned overview of the status and role of women within Ancient Egypt and the significance of a series of powerful women leading up to Cleopatra VII.



*Hatshepsut: Egypt's second confirmed woman who ruled in her own right (often portrayed as a 'sphinx' to illustrate her strength).*

Prof. Fletcher has organised and curated a special year-long exhibition in Barnsley Town Hall '***Cleopatra and the Queens of Egypt***' and the History Group has organised a visit to this on **Wednesday, July 1<sup>st</sup>**. Details of this trip have been widely publicised (including the Whalers' Facebook page) and the visit is open to all Whitby Whalers; seats are still available so do contact Ruth on 01947 810494 or by email [cr.harwood2@btinternet.com](mailto:cr.harwood2@btinternet.com) if you would like to come.



*Queens of Egypt exhibition, Experience Barnsley – trip on Wednesday, July 1<sup>st</sup>*

Having now finished our seasons programme we would thank all who have attended for their continued support, help and enthusiasm; particularly those group members who have given talks, the time you have spent in preparation and the presentation are greatly appreciated. We would encourage you to come along to the special **musical presentation by Fools' Gold on Friday morning, June 5<sup>th</sup>** (all very welcome – see details below).

**SEPTEMBER:** Do remember that u3a enrolment will take place on **Thursday morning, September 3<sup>rd</sup>** in the Spa.

Our special visit to '*Kynren*' [Bishop Auckland] is now fully subscribed for **Saturday, 5<sup>th</sup> September**.

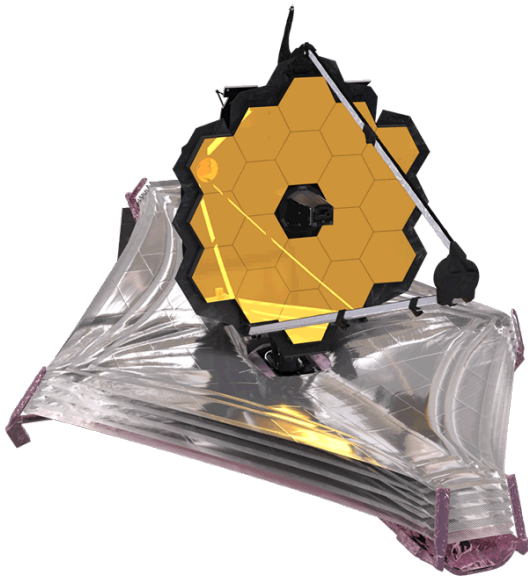
The programme up to Christmas is now organised and will be published in due course. Our first session will be on **Thursday afternoon (2.00 – 4.00pm), 24<sup>th</sup> September:**

**'The Dark Ages were brighter than you think' David Bradley**

Do have a good summer, we look forward to meeting up again next term.

## **Monthly Lecture Group:** Eastside Community Centre

May's lecture to round off the normal programme considered the parameters and dimensions involved in describing and defining not just the solar system but also the known universe (Rick H. '*From chasing Venus to Voyager: measuring and exploring the heavens*'). Beginning with historical work on the distance of the Earth from the Sun – including Cook's expedition to Tahiti to measure the transit of Venus – we commented on the distinctive behaviour of the planets and the extent of the expanding universe. Information and staggering images from the Hubble and JWST were discussed and mind-boggling ideas were covered.

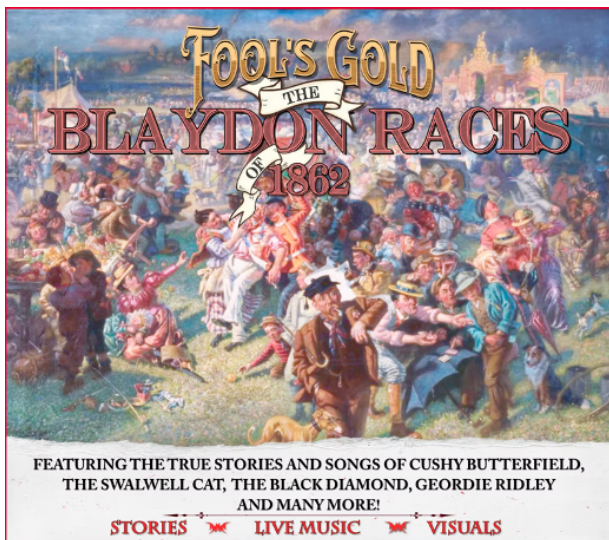


*The James Webb Space Telescope (JWST)*

A special addition to our programme sees the return of the folk music group, Fools' Gold, in their new show for 2026.

**Fool's Gold 'THE BLAYDON RACES' Friday, 5<sup>th</sup> June (10.00 – noon)**

The group are old friends of the Whalers and have given us several tremendous presentations in the past. This show takes inspiration from William Irving's painting '**The Blaydon Races**' and tells the stories of characters from the artwork using a mix of original and traditional music.



*Fool's Gold poster for their event*

All Whitby Whaler members are very welcome to attend what should be a lively and entertaining session.

We would like to thank all those who have supported our Monthly Lecture programme this past year. It is pleasing to see such support for talks on what are intentionally a diverse range of topics.

September will bring a major change in the timing of our sessions as we move to Wednesday afternoons (2.00 – 4.00pm) at the Eastside Community Centre. Our programme until Christmas is planned and the first session will be given by Roger Browne who will bring his own inimitable style to the occasion.

**Wednesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> September Roger Browne 'The Great American Songbook'**

Do have an excellent summer and we look forward to seeing you all in September.

## Play Reading Group

We are continuing to read Shakespeare's Richard III. We are all enjoying it and finding much to discuss and interpret as we work our way through this. The Play Reading Group tries to continue to meet until the end of June providing we have enough able to attend (holidays do get in the way!) Our next play lined up is one called 'Nightmare' by Norman Robbins – described as a suspense play. If we do not manage to start this play this term, then this is the play we will start with in September. The Group is aiming to restart on either Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> or 22<sup>nd</sup> of September. The date will be confirmed nearer the time.

George Osborne [mandgosb@gmail.com](mailto:mandgosb@gmail.com)

## Non-u3a events

The following are details of organisations and events in Whitby and area which may be of interest to our members.

Lectures are given once a month at the Civic Society (website <https://www.whitbycivicsociety.org.uk/>) and by the Literary & Philosophical society (Lit & Phil, website <https://whitbymuseum.org.uk>)

Films are shown weekly at the Coliseum on Thursdays, and the café is open on Tuesdays and Wednesdays (website <https://whitbyareadevelopmenttrust.org>).

Live music is available at various times at "eighteen91" (formerly the Chapel on the Hill, website <https://www.eighteen91.co.uk>).

Further afield "Scarborough Fair" comprises a series of events in the next couple of months (website [www.scarboroughfair.uk](http://www.scarboroughfair.uk)).

## Dates for your Diary

TOAST Coffee Morning Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2026 10.00am Penny Hedge

u3a Coffee Morning 20<sup>th</sup> June 2026 10 to 11.30 Rifle Club

Leaders Meeting and Lunch Friday 26<sup>th</sup> June. Eastside Community Centre

u3a Festival Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> June York University

Enrolment Day. Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September Spa Pavilion

The next newsletter will be produced on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2026

Deadline for copy (which should be sent to: haygates31@gmail.com) is 27<sup>th</sup> June 2026