



Newsletter – October 2026

A note from your Chair

We have seen the onset of Autumn a few mornings this week, spider's webs glistening in the garden and garden centres already stocking up with Christmas produce.

My slow cooker and the soup maker have come out of the back of the cupboard. There is nothing nicer than returning from a cold, wet and windy walk to the delicious smell of a comforting casserole bubbling away.

Not had to put the central heating on yet though – have you?

Best wishes

Shirley



learn,
laugh,
live

SPEAKER PROGRAMME 2026

Our Speaker Meetings are open to all Members and are held on the 2nd Friday of each month at St. Anne's United Reform Church Hall, St George's Road, St Anne's, Lancashire, FY8 2AE.

Members gather from 10.00 hours for coffee and chat with friends, old and new and the opportunity to find out about the different interest and social groups that are available. At 10:30 hours we spend a few minutes on general u3a news before sitting back and enjoying a talk or entertainment that usually ends by 12.00 hours.

FRIDAY 9TH OCTOBER

PHOTOS TELL STORIES BY Jackie Mafi

Is about the power of photos to tell stories? Some photos you instantly recognise and know the answers to the questions about the photo; other photos you see may have you puzzling but there are incredible stories behind them.



I was the National President of the Association of Speakers Clubs and am a member of the Wigan Speakers Club. My various talks arose from my becoming a member of that Club. I now have 5 different talks.

I was a Samaritan for 10 years. I worked for nearly 50 years for the Pilkington Family Trust in St Helens (a charity supporting retired employees of the Pilkington Glass Manufacturers). I was the Business Administration Manager responsible for HR, Health and Safety, IT, facilities management, company secretariat and fleet – a jack of all trades, master of none and also a Trustee for 20 years of the Pilkington Superannuation Pension Scheme.

Jackie Mafi

FRIDAY 13 NOVEMBER

*WIVES, WORKERS AND WIDOWS OF THE GREAT WAR BY **Jennifer Ray***

Wives, Workers and Widows charts the changing expectations of women on the home front during The Great War. An Illustrated talk about the Great War with a Lancashire focus. One of the first talks I wrote and was initially presented as part of the BBC Lives of The Great War Roadshows during the 1914-1918 Centenary Commemorations.

Unmistakably Lancastrian and very chatty. Jennifer shared her love of local and women's history for many years. After university study, she worked for Cultural Services, recently deciding to finish work and concentrate on her own research. She volunteers at Fleetwood Museum and enjoys time with family, who thankfully also love museums and historic sites.

FRIDAY 11 DECEMBER

*FESTIVE MUSIC BY **Matt and Yvonne Pinder***

Enjoy our musical presentation of singing and playing, learning about the instruments we perform them on and the history of the songs we will play.

Sing along or just listen and relax.



PAINTING & DRAWING GROUP

As usual on the 4th Friday of the month, we met at Ansdell United Reform Church Hall. Our numbers are a bit down at the moment, probably due to holidays. The suggested theme was 'eagle'. Chris did a very nice pencil drawing. Our next theme will be 'autumn colours'. Should be interesting.

If you would like to give us a try, please email me at allanlesley1@gmail.com

Allan Lesley



POETRY GROUP

Our poetry group had the mighty task of writing or sourcing a poem which paid homage to an already existing one. Jacky did Dolly. Mel did Ted Hughes and Wordsworth. Margaret read a good chowder recipe. John paid tribute to idioms and Manchester. Julian emulated The Light Brigade and Barbara Roger McGough. However here are 3 humorous offerings in the style of Pam Ayres, Heinrich Hoffman and Jenny Joseph. We are a light-hearted lot who giggle and recite during a fun 2 hours.

Jacky Ramage

POETRY GROUP (continued)

THE TALE OF CLARENCE

Now, Clarence was a skinny lad;
pale, sunken cheeks poor Clarence had:
and everybody saw with fear
a boy destined to disappear.
He wouldn't touch his food at all,
a single plum caused him to bawl.
But one day, one cold winter's day,
he screamed, 'You mustn't take the soup away!
O never take the soup away!
I haven't had my fill today'.

Next day, now look, the picture shows
how plump and strained our Clarence grows!
Yet, though he feels engorged and ill,
the naughty fellow cries out still,
'You mustn't take the soup away!
O never take the soup away!
I haven't had my fill today'.

The third day comes: O what a sin!
The very opposite of thin.
Yet when the soup departs the table,
he screams, as loud as he is able,
'You mustn't take the soup away!
O never take the soup away!
I haven't had my fill today'.

Look at him, now the fourth days come!
He hooovers up each final crumb;
he's larger than a double bed
and, on the fifth day, he was – dead.

By Neil Riches

POETRY GROUP (continued)

Bunny Problems

I bought a small pet rabbit, and I thought I'd call him Ben,
He sleeps inside his dormer hutch and plays inside his pen.

I often sit and watch him as he nibbles at his food,
He must be sick of lettuce when you think how much he's chewed.

He won't eat mashed potatoes, sausage rolls or curried rice,
I tried him once with carrot pie and he ate a second slice.

I couldn't find him yesterday, he gave me quite a scare,
The more I searched inside his hutch, the more he wasn't there!

I looked all-round the garden, up the path and in the house,
I couldn't see the scoundrel; he was quiet as a mouse.

I found him later snoozing behind the kitchen door,
He'd left a pile of you-know-what and piddled on the floor!

I'd have to build a stronger pen, to keep him safe inside,
With lots of nooks and crannies so he'll have somewhere to hide.

Or maybe now I've had enough of building cony pens,
Perhaps I'll make a rabbit pie, and buy myself some hens!!

By Alan Mayor

PRACTICAL GARDENING

"Bountiful Plunder"



September's meeting saw us lifting and separating.

Brave members came armed with gloves, pots and trowels, sleeves rolled up and ready to garden! The soil is still warm.

Plants have outgrown their space. Lifting them and splitting into smaller clumps, each with good roots, serves 2 purposes. It invigorates the plant itself and allows cost free sharing.

We met at a member's garden and by invitation followed a list of available perennials. Popular plunder items included heleniums, rudbeckia, day lilies, erigeron, stipa tenuissima, even free standing penstemon, as well as self-seeded biennials like foxglove and honesty.



But the bounty that gave us the hardest won reward and best photograph was the elegant and beautiful grass *Miscanthus sinensis*, "morning light". Swaying silvery green in growth, flashing in flickering light as the wind catches it, it throws up soft pink plumes in autumn before turning flirtatiously blonde in winter. Reluctant to the spade at first it eventually yielded and was split into many new plants. Try at home with your own grasses when the soil is still warm.



Members who missed the August session were also able to make charming driftwood miniature gardens. With refreshments came the raffle.



This month's prize was a splendid wooden trug – perfect for displaying seasonal treasures like gourds, pumpkins, pine cones, Easter eggs, Valentine hearts, you name it.

Our October meeting will focus on bulbs, spring planters and sowing winter crops.

Muriel Farrow

WALKING GROUP

"Blowing in the Wind"

The weather forecast was grim; wet and windy. It probably explains why only six hardy souls arrived in Knott End to undertake a walk of a little over five miles.

We set off from Quail's Holme Road car park and within minutes, the rain began. However, it was only a brief shower and by the time we reached the L. S. Lowry memorial, it was hoods down.



Apparently, the famous artist used to sketch travellers as they disembarked the ferry from Fleetwood.

We strode at a fair pace because it felt as if Autumn had arrived with a very brisk wind. Conversation flowed and, in spite of the weather, good humour prevailed.

Soon we arrived at Hackensall Hall and Richard gave us the lowdown on its history. As we continued, we passed through picturesque countryside with lots of ripening cornfields. We were glad of the lanes they created which reduced the wind chill factor! Further on we were regaled with tales of the brine wells which furnished the now infamous local ICI plant with necessary chemicals. As we approached the end of our walk the rain started in earnest and we arrived, famished, at the Bourne Arms in the nick of time. The heavens opened! We sat in the comfort of the restaurant (who knew so many dishes could be concocted without vegetable matter!), overlooking the bay and feeling smug.



Pam Trivass

WALKING GROUP

"Five have an Imperfect Adventure"

On a damp misty autumn morning, Five are walking up an enclosed path to meet a cobbled lane which marks the beginning of today's Romp. They skirt Holcombe Manor House and Pinfold Cottage. A 'Pinfold' is an enclosure for stray animals. No



strays here! They are all Bona-Fide members of the Lytham St Anne's u3a Walking Group, setting out on their latest adventure.

They negotiate a cattle grid and pass between

old gate pillars marking the boundary of the National Trusts Holcombe Moor Estate. The path continues to climb, then levels out with fine views to the East. No doubt these Five are not perfect as they backtrack after missing the rising track which is part of the boundary of the well-marked army firing-range. Today the red flags aren't flying as the Five tighten their hood-strings against the worsening weather and head towards the four-sided monument which marks the spot of an ancient Pilgrims Cross, known to have been here in the 12th century which may have been a wayside resting place for pilgrims bound for Whalley Abbey.

Following a footpath made up of a long line of large flat stones, some exhibiting three dimensional sculptured patterns on their surface, Five continue in the drizzle to Harcles Hill. There is an invigorating openness about Holcombe Moor from which the views are splendid. Pendle Hill lies to the North, Winter Hill to the West and the Southern skyline is crammed with undulations of the Peak District, just visible below the low rain clouds. From here, Peel Tower is clearly visible, and after a few more ups and downs, the imperfect Five close in and immediately take shelter behind it as the wind picks up.

WALKING GROUP (continued)

The Peel Monument was built in 1851–2 to commemorate the initiative of Sir Robert Peel in repealing the Corn Laws of yesteryear. Peel, who came from nearby Bury, laid the foundations for the modern Police Force. Indeed, the first policemen were called ‘Peelers’. Later they became known as ‘Roberts’ then the more familiar ‘Bobbies’.

The direct decent to the car park is a bit steep for these Five, so they take the longer but gentler outer ring-road. They are not as robust as they once were. The Five pass the Shoulder of Mutton Pub on the way down, but today refreshments will be taken at the Grey Mare, a short drive on the way home and with superb views over the moors. Once ensconced into this now familiar watering hole, five get comfortable in the Window Seat looking out over the moors and enjoy a leisurely lunch, and are in no particular rush to depart, bringing to an end another enjoyable if slightly imperfect adventure.



Mike Ripley

DISCUSSION GROUP 2

We met again and it was another great success. Our topics were, Populism and AI. It was attended by Anne, Kirsten, Viv, Geraldine and me, Clare. There was input from everyone and we did divert onto Charles Spencer’s interview with Laura Keunsberg which created a lot of interest. We chatted for 2 hours ending with a lot of laughter which is great for the soul.

Our next 2 topics are “What makes you joyful” and “Entertainment in the Fylde area”. Contact claradent@hotmail.co.uk

BIRD WATCHING GROUP

Birdwatching outing Condor Green and Glasston Dock

The weather stayed pretty dry for us on our outing to Condor Green, Condor Pool and Glasston Docks, just a single short shower while we had lunch. We had a quick look around the car park before walking over to the hide for high tide.



Only birds seen on the way were **Long-tailed Tit, Robin, Blackbird and Swallow** but as we left the area, we had two **Sparrowhawks** being mobbed by **Carrion Crow** and then two **Raven's** being annoyed by a group of Swallows.

The views at the hide were disappointing for high tide, with only **Mute Swan, Little Egret, Redshank, Black-headed Gull, Little Grebe and Coot** seen but facing back to the river we had **Curlew, Redshank, Lapwing, Teal, Mallard, Ruff, Spotted Redshank, Gadwall and Common Sandpiper**.

We then walked along the coastal path into Glasston Docks – huge numbers of **GreyLag Geese** were coming in but all we saw on the outgoing tide was a single **Oystercatcher**, thousands of **Redshanks** and over 400 **Lapwings**, dozens of **Cormorants** on the estuary with just a few **Little Egret**, some **Starlings** and a single **Skylark** on the saltmarsh. On the trees by the path were a charm of **Goldfinches** and a single **Greenfinch**. Overhead large number of **House Martins** and **Swallows** were gathering before their migration south. Unfortunately, the Bikers Cafe hut was closed but the Quayside Cafe was open for anyone who needed it. The cafe hasn't yet put out it's bird feeders so only addition here was **House Sparrow** and we then added **Herring Gull, Greater Black-backed Gull, Common Gull** and **Moorhen** when looking in the marina.

The walk back to the car park was lit up by a hunting **Peregrine Falcon** which hunted for at least 10 minutes regularly chasing all the waders and turning the table on two **Carrion Crows** that tried to mob her – she chased them off pretty rapidly.



BIRD WATCHING GROUP (continued)

As is often the case something had to suffer and it looked like a **Lapwing** had to pay the cost as the Peregrine swooped and started to feed.

As we were still fairly early in the day the group chose to go to Banks Farm to look for the **Yellow Wagtails**. Unfortunately, only Janet and I who were in the lead car managed to see three full colours yellow birds. The bird took flight across the farm and out towards the river leaving only **Pied Wagtails** behind when we got out to walk the path. Our final bird of the day was a **Kestrel**.

Our next walk on 14th October will be to Brockholes LWT leaving Headroom Gate by the Parish Church at 9.15 or meet at Brockholes visitor centre at 10.00 and then on 11th November we will do either Leighton Moss RSPB or Martin Mere WWT to be agreed at our October meet up. We have spaces in the group if anyone wants to join us.

David Blair

SAUNTER TOGETHER GROUP

Marton Mere Walk today, numbers went down after overnight rain, but still 9 attended and the rain held off and we even saw some sunshine. Not many birds visible, we saw a female Pheasant from one of the hides, I'm reliably informed by Ken, but it looked just like the Bittern on the poster to me. but mainly rabbits!



On leaving we seemed to be walking through a bed of Swallows who were swarming between our legs looking for bugs. An enjoyable 3-mile walk ending at the rather lovely cafe in Stanley Park, where the food was up to the usual exceptional standard.



Looking forward to the Illumination fish and chip walk next month.



Allan Williams

PLODDERS GROUP

We talk so much when we are walking that we frequently forget to take a photograph!

Despite the ominous weather forecast in August, we only had a light shower. Anne Comrie led the group and we began our walk from Booths in St Annes and had a leisurely stroll around Cypress Point and back to Booths via the red railings which can be seen from the road. Several of our group commented that they had only driven past that area and didn't realise how lovely it was. As usual, we enjoyed a drink afterwards and it was agreed that it was a nice way to spend a couple of hours.

In September, the sun was shining as we met at Beachcombers for a walk to the tram sheds and back. Our beach at St Annes is beautiful and even though the tide had only just turned, the sea was far enough out not to be a problem. As we drank our well-earned coffees outside Beachcombers later, we could imagine we were abroad.

Our next plod is on the fourth Thursday of October and we are meeting at Ashton Gardens Pavilion for a park and beach walk.

Catharine Oldroyd

TRANSPORT & HISTORY GROUP

We are now making firm plans to continue "THG" as our attendance numbers have continued to rise. In order to avoid a clash with others speaker groups in the area – and to accommodate the changing needs of the Methodist Church Hall now that the banking hub has relocated – from **October** we will be meeting in the **Lecture Room** of the hall and changing our meeting day to a **Tuesday**.

We have also now invested in a speaker system which has already enhanced the experience for all our members.

TRANSPORT & HISTORY GROUP (continued)

The programme from **October 2026** to **March 2027** now looks like this: –

Date	Subject	Speaker
Tuesday October 27 th	Seaplanes over the Fylde	Dave Ward
Tuesday November 24 th	40 Years of Rallying (Abridged)	Neil Turner
Tuesday December 15 th	It's a surprise!	Xmas Special
Tuesday January 26 th	Railways towards the end of Steam	John Wood
Tuesday February 23 rd	Strange Beginnings A History of Volkswagen	Peter Skinner
Tuesday March 23 rd	Powered Flight – Part 2	Gary Thornton

In August we heard from group member Gordon Day who gave a great presentation about the once ubiquitous **Hillman Imp**. As a former owner and serial restorer, of Imps and other cars, his fascinating rundown of the model's history – and development issues – was well received.

In September member **Dave Ward** will be bringing his knowledge of local aviation history into play when he talks about some of the history behind the manufacture of **Seaplanes** in Lytham – a programme which arguably gave rise to the Fylde becoming a world-class centre of military and civil aircraft design expertise.

"THG" have received fantastic support so far and we hope that will continue. Our talks cover a wide range of subjects with a common link of "transport" – not necessarily on four wheels! New members will be made very welcome. We meet on Tuesdays once a month. Our venue is The Drive Methodist Church Hall on Clifton Drive. Meetings commence at **10.30** with refreshments (Coffee/Tea & Biscuits) with the talk planned to commence at about 10.45 lasting about 50 minutes. Cost per person is **£3**, which includes Coffee/Tea & Biscuits on arrival.

We look forward to meeting friends old and new! You can contact us at any time on our dedicated email transporthistorygroupu3a@gmail.com.

Peter Skinner & Chris Holley

ITALIAN GROUP 2 BEGINNERS

Ciao! Our Italian Group meets every Monday morning in each other's houses. Whilst enjoying a caffe latte, we complete activities from a BBC 'Talk Italian' course which involves speaking and listening.



We have translated short stories and listened to Italian songs whilst reading the lyrics. We role played a meal in an Italian restaurant ordering pizza, gelato, tiramisu and vino rosso! We are now hoping to practice our conversation in an actual Italian restaurant to further improve our fluency.

The group have been going for almost a year and we are all enjoying both the challenge of a new language and the social side of things.

Grazie per l'opportunit  U3A!

Angela Potter

COULD YOU LEAD OUR HISTORY GROUP?

We urgently need someone to temporarily run our History Group once a month. Can you help? Our Chair, Shirley Dickson lsau3achair@outlook.com, has very recently sent out an email with all the information so if you have some time and are interested in history, please contact Shirley or Eunice Taylor, our Groups Co-ordinator at taylorunice50@gmail.com.

GROUPS with VACANCIES

Bridge

I have been unable to run our weekly meeting following an operation to replace my right shoulder but it has been business as usual thanks to all the members contributing their time to make Thursday afternoon run smoothly. Thank you to everyone. Hopefully normal service will be resumed shortly so will continue to welcome new members to our friendly Bridge meetings. Contact Marjorie Short.

Scrabble

Scrabble – **A new venue!** The group have relocated to St Anne's Library on Clifton Drive. We have been made very welcome with a reserved area and coffee and tea available – all for free. Easy unlimited parking close by and bus stop right outside. So, if you fancy a bit of fun and some brain exercises do come and join us any Wednesday morning starting at 11.00am. Call Christine Holland 07790744048.

British Sign Language

Would you like to learn British Sign language. It's a fascinating subject and fun to learn a new language as well as excellent brain exercise. It would be a self-help group using the internet and books. If you are interested, please contact me, Christine Holland, at christonyholland@yahoo.com and I will arrange a meeting to get the group started.

Chess Group

Ansdell Library, a haven of peace, a haven providing shelter from searing heat and the occasional deluge, a haven providing refreshments, computer facilities and, not surprisingly, a multitude of books.

A multi-generational venue, welcoming a toddlers' singing group and old geezers playing chess. Next session Monday 5 October 10.00 to 12.00 hours.

All welcome (as long as you know how to move the pieces!) and we will give hints and tips. Contact Ken Romney koromney@gmail.com

Canasta Group

Is anyone willing to start a Canasta group? Contact lynnbythesea@yahoo.co.uk

friends learning

ORGANISED BY THE u3a TRUST

Introducing u3a Rewind



Share your memories of the music and youth cultures that shaped your younger years in our new learning activity. What songs got you dancing? What did you wear and who inspired your style? Help us to create a unique collection of u3a members experiences for everybody to reminisce and enjoy. [Submit your stories and photos](#), and suggest a song for the u3a rewind playlist.

friends learning

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Join our celebration event

We would love as many members as possible to join us on Friday 16 October for this year's Essay Competition online awards ceremony! This year's theme was The Most Incredible Journey. Find out live which essay has won the top spot, out of 140+ entries, and celebrate the writing talents of u3a members. The event starts at 2pm. [Reserve your place.](#)

friends offers

ORGANISED BY THE u3a TRUST

Book a u3a getaway

This November, join our *Yorkshire Festive Treats* getaway and experience one of Britain's biggest Christmas markets and York's rich confectionery heritage. You can also plan ahead, as the tours for 2027 are taking bookings. Learn about aviation heritage in March, explore *Dartmoor Zoo* in April and enjoy expert-led wine tasting in May. Each trip offers learning opportunities and a chance to meet u3a members from across the UK.

Have a browse and reserve your place on [the u3a getaways website.](#)

Free online talks, workshops and courses

u3a members can access a wide range of free online talks, workshops and courses through their membership. Most sessions are led by fellow members, sharing their expertise, with additional talks from notable speakers and organisations.

All events are bookable via Eventbrite. Please ensure you can attend when booking and cancel if you're unable to make it so others can participate. Events are exclusively for u3a members.

If you are considering offering a talk or workshop, please get in touch at events@u3a.org.uk – we'd love to hear from you.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Jane Sutton
 Ann Barnett
 Tina Leivers
 Catherine Podmore

Antony Sutton
 Matthew Eastham
 Arthur Leivers

Gail Ryan
 Tim Richards
 Jacki Moon

Our policies and other useful information can be viewed on our website on the **News and Info** page. Press [here](#) to access the information.

Alternatively, these policies can also be viewed at our Friday Speaker Meetings, the printed folder is on display at the information desk.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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