

On the 17th June, a jolly band of 46 u3a members filled a Maude's coach and set out to enjoy the delights of Whitby. The weather was warm and although the roads were busy, we arrived at about 11.15 am where we were left to our own devices. Some members looked for culture by visiting the Abbey with museum and the old parish church. Others enjoyed some retail therapy and one member pursued a possible family link by visiting Captain Cook's Museum. There were no stories of herring gulls stealing chips or of members dressing up as Goths or at least not admitted.

15 members of the group then undertook some essential research into the ingredients needed to make a commercial gin. This necessitated a visit to the award winning Whitby Gin Distillery, established fairly recently, and some serious gin tasting took place. Alison from the distillery, assisted by Fred, very ably took us through the manufacturing process. This new company has established itself within just a few years and is now making 6 gins. each with its own flavour, using local ingredients such as heather, honey and even seaweed. The distillery has ambitious plans to develop, including the use of premises near the Abbey, allowing increased marketing possibilities. Some members couldn't leave without purchasing a bottle and the 'Prince of Darkness' was very popular.

We all returned to the bus which left Whitby at about 5.00 pm returning safely to Barnard Castle at 6.30 pm as planned. Thanks to Sue for superb organisation.

Ian Reid

