

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

NORTHWEST REGION

NEWSLETTER MAY 2017 NO 46



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ACTING CHAIR'S MESSAGE



In our March newsletter I announced our "Learning in The Future" workshop. This takes place on Wednesday 21st June in Warrington. So far we have twenty five people registered. Places are still available. It is free to attend and all the details and booking form are on our website.



Once again, our Summer School is proving to be very popular. It is still over three months away but there very few places remaining with some courses already full. If you are interested, please get your applications in soon.

And finally, the North West Region AGM takes place at the Friends Meeting House in Manchester on Wednesday 7th June. We are seeking nominations for various committee roles. New members bring new ideas and keep

the regional activities vibrant. I encourage you to volunteer and help us achieve this.



The Regional Team was saddened to learn of the death of Sylvia Dillon. Sylvia, a member of Aughton and Ormskirk U3A, developed the Memory Course which has been used by many members of the U3A family. Our sympathies are offered to Sylvia's family.

Best wishes

Neil Stevenson

TRUSTEE NEWS AND TOPICS



The past few months have been pretty hectic, to say the least, and I think I have managed to travel the length and breadth of the North West. (Virgin Trains and a Senior Travel Pass have been well used!) I have enjoyed meeting Committees, visiting groups at their monthly meetings, holding workshops and training events and organising Consultation meetings. I've spent a lot of time on the phone and email, answering queries and sharing news. I have also managed to visit almost all the networks at least once. Thank you to everyone who has invited me.

Coming to meet you isn't only about offering my help and advice; it is also an opportunity for me to learn from you so that I can share good practice as well as see some of the amazing things you do and share your enthusiasm and success. I can also raise your concerns at the NEC so that the Trustees can consider whether our advice needs to be reviewed and renewed.

Currently we have three new North West U3As either in the start-up process or their Inaugural Phase. Congratulations to Lymm and Thelwall U3A, who have recently opened their doors to members. Whitworth and Timperley U3As have both had their Launch meetings and are preparing the way for their Inaugural meetings, hopefully in the summer.

New training programmes have now been started for volunteers who want to open and support new groups as well as to support existing U3As. This will not be a quick process but it should eventually help to ensure that every group which needs help will be able to get it.

Meanwhile, don't hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions or need advice.

Gill Russell

NW Regional Trustee

NW REGIONAL COMMITTEE

WEBSITE REGIONAL SPEAKERS LIST

Please note that the speakers on the list are NOT approved by the Regional Committee. We do not book them or negotiate fees. The list has been created from recommendations made by U3As but the Regional Committee has not vetted them in any way. It is important that individual groups contact the speakers to determine suitability and cost. If you have enjoyed a speaker not on the list, please contact myself or a member of the Regional Committee so their name can be added.



FINDING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Many groups have difficulty getting people to serve on their committee. However without a committee, the U3A cannot continue to function. A lot of members resist because they are retired and don't want to feel they have taken on another job. A lot of committees have members who stay too long because no one else will do it. This is a bad idea as it goes against the Constitution but it also creates a situation where the U3A might begin to stagnate. If a committee is incomplete and cannot find a solution the U3A will close. So my question to the people who resist is 'Do you want a U3A?'. If so, then please consider getting involved. It can be a great

experience and it will keep your U3A vibrant.



UPDATING DETAILS

Unlike the National Office, the North West Region does not have a form for updating your details. So we have to rely on you to remember (with an occasional reminder from me).

Our Regional Secretary collects the names of Chairs and Secretaries in order to send out AGM notices. I keep a list of committee members for each U3A with the main contact details and I also have a distribution list for the newsletter. Rosalie and I update each other so hopefully we always have access to the most recent changes. It is very helpful if you let one of us know when your committee members change so that we can ensure you get information and news. Thank you to the groups which have already sent their updates, Please keep them coming.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

NWREC

Residential Summer School
29th August - 1st September
2017

At Newton Rigg College,
Penrith, Cumbria, CA11 0AH

*An opportunity to learn in the inspiring setting
of the Lake District*

This year we are offering ten courses including those which have proved popular in previous years and a number of new courses. Course available are:-

About Beauty

Architecture: The ABC of Cities

Digital Digging for Armchair
Archaeologists

Geology of Lakeland Landscapes

Painting with Stitches

Medicine in the 21st Century

Recorder Playing

Russian and Soviet Culture

Science is for Everyone

Ukulele for Beginners

*Newton Rigg College is located close to J40
of the M6 and less than five minutes' drive*

from Penrith Railway Station. Fees are £275 for residential delegates and £155 for non-residential. A £35 discount is available for bookings made and deposits received by 31st May 2017. Full details and booking forms are available on the North West Region website.

NORTH WEST REGIONAL CONFERENCE AND AGM 2017

**THIS YEAR'S NORTH WEST AGM AND
CONFERENCE WILL BE HELD AT THE
QUAKER MEETING HOUSE IN
MANCHESTER ON JUNE 7th.**

DIRECTIONS: *Manchester Quaker Meeting House is a short walk from the Metro stop on St Peter's Square and about 10 minutes' walk from Oxford Road Station. There are car parks close by.*

**THERE WILL BE BREAKOUT GROUPS
IN THE MORNING FOCUSED ON TOP
TIPS FOR TREASURERS, BEACON
MANAGEMENT SYSTEM AND BEING A
(U3A) TRUSTEE. AS WELL AS THE
ABOVE THERE WILL BE A SINGING
GROUP FROM BOLTON U3A.**

These groups are not just for Committee members. The guest speaker, Neil Smith, is a musician and raconteur. He is a classical guitarist and his talk, entitled "Have a Guitar Will Travel", is based on his exploits as a professional

musician interspersed with musical performance. His talk has been enthusiastically recommended by some of our members. Neil's talk will be followed by the AGM.

Details of the event and registration are now available on the Regional Website.

REGIONAL WORKSHOPS

THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE are currently planning new workshops and there are now two ready for registration.

They are:

May 19, 2017 Charity Law and Finance with John Ellison, National Treasurer. Venue Quaker Meeting House Liverpool from 10.30 - 16.00. Registration now available on the website.

Information and discussions will include:

- Charitable purposes
- U3A Activities
- Trusteeship
- Group venues and organisation
- Reserves and fees
- Bank Accounts and money handling
- Gift Aid, any Finance aspects raised

June 21 2017 Learning in the Future, online courses. To be held at the Gateway Centre, Warrington from 11.00 - 16.00.

Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) are a new way of learning about subjects that interest you. MOOCs:

- Are easily accessible using the Internet
- Are open to everyone who wants to learn
- Are (mostly) free to use
- Allow you to learn at your own pace
- Offer a choice of over 5000 courses

Ian Hunt, Perth U3A, will present. Registration is now available on the website, where more info is available.

Other workshops have been proposed for later in the year. These will probably be Growth and Communication
Inclusiveness Awareness
Committee Forum

We also hope to revisit Much Wittering in the Marsh, where a couple of years ago we observed the worst ever AGM. Members enjoyed spotting the deliberate mistakes and discussing how to do it better. Details will be available in future newsletters and on the website in due course. All of our workshops are developed from members' suggestions, which we welcome.

AROUND THE REGION

FORTHCOMING EVENTS



HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

CONFERENCE: Thursday 26th October

from 10.00 - 4.00

Cost £15 for U3A members, £20 for
non-members

Lancaster and Morecambe U3A are hosting this conference at the Ashton Hall in Lancaster Town Hall. A programme, and registration form, are available from either the Lancs-Morecambe website or the NW Regional website:

www.landm-u3a.org.uk

www.u3asites.org.uk/north-west

You can also contact the organiser, Gill Baynes, at

lm3alialiaisonresearch@gmail.com

The event is being offered to all members of North West Regional U3As and the programme consists of a series of short presentations about various aspects of active ageing, treatment and

intervention for dementia and the role of medical screening and pathological testing.

There will be stalls with information about various support organisations and an opportunity to make a donation to Cancer care.

Cruise News.



Thanks to a member from Halton and Warrington U3As who is a guest speaker on Fred Olsen cruises, I have been able to negotiate with the company for a discount for members of North West U3As only.

I still have flyers available from Fred Olsen Cruises. Please send me an s.a.e. if you would like one (or several). The offer is available until September 2017, s.a.e. to G. Russell, 71 Barn Hey Crescent, Meols, Wirral, CH47 9RW

AROUND THE REGION REPORTS



CUMBRIA U3A NETWORK HOSTS 2nd SUCCESSFUL ENERGY CONFERENCE

Building on the success of its First Energy Conference, held in 2015, Cumbria U3A Network's Second Conference took place at Rheged near Penrith on 31st March 2017. Under the chairmanship of Professor Mike Green, experts from universities, industry and politics provided up to date evidence on topics, some controversial, relating to meeting future energy needs in a sustainable, environmentally friendly, way. The conference started by a talk on meeting the requirements of the 2015 Paris Agreement to restrict the emission of greenhouse gases, the need for which was well illustrated by the next talk on the melting of glaciers. Maintaining our electricity supply in a low carbon future was also discussed as well as the impact that fracking would have on energy production, on the local communities near the production sites, and the safety issues associated with the process. The final two talks described what local communities and individuals can do to help achieve a local carbon future. Delegates were provided with an information pack and there was also a well visited Exhibition stand staffed by Cumbria Action for Sustainability. Both of these were financed by a generous grant from Cumbria Community Foundation.

Members also had the opportunity to purchase Penrith U3A's newly published collection of papers "Climate Change and Energy". The conference was fully booked with 140 U3A members from all over Cumbria and beyond attending, and, from the feedback, they judged the conference as even more successful than the

first. Given this, Maggie Potts, the chair of the committee organising the excellent conference said that, maybe, there will be a third one in the future!

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Based on a previous article in Third Age Matters, and questions I get asked when I visit U3As, I am going to try and include some Frequently Asked Questions – and their answers – in some of our future newsletters.

- **Are we a club or a branch?**

Neither! Each U3A is operationally independent and as there is no central U3A organisation you cannot be a branch. A club is much trickier. It is usually an organisation for people with a specific interest e.g. Bridge, Golf, Cricket, Football. Or it could be a church social club, a nightclub or a political club. U3As are Charities, which entitles them to receive donations, gift aid, access to charitable rates for room hire etc. The description of a club sometimes shares elements of the U3A philosophy so perhaps they are not mutually exclusive, but U3A has different values and our self-help ethos sets us a little apart from the occupations promoted by clubs.

**WE HOPE YOU HAVE FOUND THIS
INFORMATION USEFUL, THANK YOU
FOR READING THE MAY
NEWSLETTER.**