

From the Chair

Happy New Year to you all, I hope 2014 brings you much enjoyment and fulfilment from your U3A activities. Perhaps the start of a new year offers an opportunity to learn a little more about the workings of U3As or to share your own knowledge with other members. We have several workshop or study days on offer in this newsletter for information or just enjoyment. There are details of our AGM in June and the Summer School next August. Our small Committee is seeking some new members from June onwards; if you would like to be involved please get in touch with me to discuss what is involved.

We now send this newsletter to every Chair or Business Secretary in the Region and also to the many members who have requested it personally (our circulation is well over 1,200). If you think one of our events might be suitable for someone who doesn't receive their own copy, please do pass the information on. We are conscious that many U3A members receive little or no information about the North West Committee and yet we represent you all. Please help us to keep in touch with the whole Region. Thank you and do read on.

Sue Watkinson

NEW WORKSHOP EVENT

PLANNING AND MANAGING A GROUP IN U3A for GROUP LEADERS/CO-ORDINATORS/CONVENORS

- *Are you the leader of a Group within a U3A?*
- *Would you like some new ideas for running the Group?*
- *Do you need advice on how to manage the Group's finances?*
- *Does your Group need some new topics or materials?*
- *Is managing numbers or succession planning your main concern?*

then we may have some solutions for you so book now (application form - NW Region website)

Monday 3 March

**at the Unitarian Chapel in Cross Street, Manchester,
from 11.00 a.m. until 4.00 p.m.**

*The leader will be Pam Jones, Trustee for South East Region and Chair of the National Development Sub-Committee, North West Trustee Jenny Carley, Treasurer Peter Monaghan and members of the NWREC Administrator for this event is Sue Watkinson, Chairman NW Region on 01695 422 423 or email billandsue@googlemail.com The event is **FREE of charge** to all U3A members in the North West.*

Interested members of ALL North West U3As are invited to a

FAMILY HISTORY STUDY DAY

(supported by the North West Region)

at the Castle Street Centre, Kendal

on Saturday 29 March 2014 from 10.00 a.m. – 4.00 p.m.

(Registration from 9.30 a.m.)

There will be four presentations:

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| • <i>"Starting Family History and how a Family History Society can help"</i> | <i>John Steel.</i> |
| • <i>"Wills and how to find them"</i> | <i>John Harman</i> |
| • <i>"Police Ancestors"</i> | <i>Chris Payne</i> |
| • <i>"World War 1 Ancestors"</i> | <i>Ken Tulley</i> |

Cost: £2, payable on the day, to cover the cost of drinks. Please bring your own picnic lunch).

The Castle Street Centre is 5 minutes from the town centre, opposite St George's Church and on the east side of Stramongate Bridge. Unfortunately, there is only limited parking at the Centre, itself. There is some on-street parking nearby and there are multi-storey car parks in the town. For those using satnav directions, the post code of the Centre is LA9 7AD.

The contact person is John Harman on 01995 603232 or email jandcharman@gmail.com

Deeside and Wirral Network is organising a
Literature Day - 'Leap into Literacy'
on Friday 4th April. 10.00 a.m. – 4.00 p.m.
at Hoylake Community Centre

Members of ALL North West U3As will be most welcome to attend.

The event will begin and end with talks by published authors. There will also be presentations about book illustration and biography as a genre and we hope to include other activities such as a Creative writing workshop, Play reading, and Poetry reading as plans progress. Full details including cost and booking forms and directions will be on the website www.u3asites.org.uk/deeside-wirral and www.u3asite.org.uk/north-west For more information please contact Gill on 0151 633 2796 or email grussellmeols@hotmail.co.uk

AGM and Guest speakers – 10th June

at the Ashton Hall within Lancaster Town Hall

11.00 a.m. – 4.00 p.m.

Our morning speaker is Professor Christine Milligan, who runs the Centre for Ageing Research in the Faculty of Health and Medicine at Lancaster University.

She will give a light-hearted approach to the many processes involved as the body grows older

The AGM will follow the lunch break

and we are in the process of confirming an afternoon speaker to entertain and inform you.

North West Region's Residential Summer School will be held at Newton Rigg College near Penrith Tuesday 26 – Friday 29 August 2014

**Newton Rigg College is an open campus very near to Penrith and just five minutes' drive from the M6
Ullswater and the Northern Lake District is on the doorstep.**

Once again we are offering seven courses with two new tutors and three new topics. Choose from Archaeology (Carole Allen), Art (use of colour-Jacqueline Cartwright), Creative Writing (Maggie Smith), Digital Photography (Rod Marsh), Geology (Chris Arkwright), Novels of 1961 (Meg Shaw) and A Musical Journey from Renaissance to Romanticism (Gillian Russell)

The Summer School starts mid-afternoon on Tuesday 26 August and ends with lunch on Friday 29 August. Accommodation is in single, en suite rooms and all meals are provided to residential students.

Day students are welcome too, with buffet lunch, teas/coffees included;
evening meals can be taken at the College for an extra charge

Several of the courses will include a day out (all expenses included) to cover field trips or visits
We have held our prices at £300 (£150 Day rate) with an early bird discount of £40 (£20 Day rate)

**provided a deposit and completed booking form is received by 31 March 2014
(date now extended by two months due to a problem with advertising this event in Third Age Matters).**

Full details and application forms are available on the North West website,
or phone David Joseph (member of NWREC) on 01625 861 327 for more information

Caption competition – no prizes - just a mention in the next Newsletter! Photo by Jenny Carley from my recent holiday. e-mail your captions to me carleyjenny@gmail.com

For example: "Did I see you at U3A last week?"



Trustee Topics – Networking in Action

About 50% of U3As in the NW region belong to a Network - that means many U3As do not. I am a great believer in Networks. They work at a local level keeping committees updated and look beyond what their U3A has to offer. Each Network operates differently, just like U3As, but they all co-operate with one another, some on a formal basis with a constitution and others more informal. The members decide their own organisational structure. You may belong to more than one Network; some Networks cross regional borders. They are very diverse, they can decide what they want to offer, here is a list of some of the activities that Networks do:

- Developing and sharing lists of potential speakers
- Maintaining and sharing a database of all study/interest groups in member U3As
- Organising network study/interest days for members of the network's U3As (and sometimes neighbouring U3As).
- Organising training/information events for U3A committee members and potential committee members.
- Organising support for group leaders.
- Organising shared learning projects.
- Organising an annual conference for member U3As.
- Establishing relationships with universities, including the OU, schools etc, for the benefit of U3A members.
- Providing a regular forum for member U3As to meet together to share good practice and discuss issues of mutual concern e.g. growth patterns, waiting lists.
- Setting up reciprocal interest group arrangements between participating U3As.
- Producing a newsletter.
- Arranging inter-U3A competitions.
- Setting up local initiatives.
- Setting up email lists for speedier communication.
- Increasing opportunity to establish links with outside organisations.
- Sharing information on available grants.
- Increasing awareness of U3A in the community.
- Sharing resources.
- Offering a local platform for individual U3As to get their views across.

So if your U3A does not belong to a Network ask yourself 'Why Not' Further information can be found on the NW Region website – News

Jenny Carley (NW Trustee)

Trustee Notes

The NW region needs you!

If you feel that you have enough experience to join us on the committee please contact Sue Watkinson. If you don't want to make the full commitment to the committee we need help to facilitate seminars, organise events, prepare publications and a whole lot more. We are only seven members at present – we cannot continue providing you with study days, summer schools, seminars and workshops etc. without your help.

Notice of events in the planning stages

Growth Matters – getting smaller or rapidly expanding? Outgrowing premises, waiting lists, shortage of volunteers? – all these problems will be covered. **A full day event with the North West Regional Committee. 28th April at the Gateway in Warrington** – more details in our next newsletter but book the date in your diary now.

A repeat of the popular **Web Masters' Workshop will be held in Penrith on 6 May**. Numbers will be limited to 20 to ensure everyone gets the best information and we are also limiting the number from any one U3A to TWO members only. More details in our next newsletter.

The St Helens event on 27 January is now full.

AN INFORMATION ITEM FROM THIRD AGE TRUST

An opportunity to study on-line courses with front-line Universities, along or with friends or even as a U3A Group

FutureLearn offers on-line study courses with front line Universities, bite-size chunks of knowledge available to all U3A members. There are now 36 courses available on FutureLearn.com, in a wide variety of topics for you to choose from. These include literature, history, social sciences, computing & IT, environment & sustainability, marketing, psychology and physical science, to name just a few.

You can still sign up for any of the year's first courses starting in January:

- Sustainability, society and you by the University of Nottingham
- Introduction to forensic science by the University of Strathclyde
- Critical listening for studio production by Queen's University Belfast
- Climate change: challenges and solutions by the University of Exeter
- Shakespeare's Hamlet: text, performance, and culture by the University of Birmingham
- Inside cancer: how genes influence cancer development by the University of Bath
- Preparing for uni by the University of East Anglia
- Corpus linguistics: method, analysis, interpretation by Lancaster University
- Good brain, bad brain: basics by the University of Birmingham

Other News

Research into Alzheimer's Disease with Manchester & Lancaster Universities. Sufficient volunteers for the initial study came forward and thank you to every one of them. Once this information is processed the departments concerned will be seeking around 60 further volunteers to undertake the next phase of the research.

And another University link – there is a new Department for Ageing at Chester University. Some NWREC and local members are meeting with Professor Paul Kingston to find out how local U3As can help to support their work. More information will follow in our next newsletter.

The 50 Plus Show in Manchester takes place on 28/29 March in Manchester Central (formerly G-Mex), from 10.00 a.m. – 4.00 p.m.. The Third Age Trust has an information stand and there is a huge amount of information available from other stall holders. Why not come along and say "hello" to the team while you are there?

PLEASE HELP!

Our North West Committee needs nominations for the AGM. Please think about this seriously and contact any of the members to discuss what is involved. It can be fun and rewarding to help our fellow U3As to learn more about running their organisations. We would also like members to volunteer to offer local support when we run events in a particular part of the North West. Just being present to welcome members, help with refreshments, advise us on rooms and facilities – it will all help.

The Committee of the North West Regional Executive for 2013/14

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