

THE THIRD AGE TRUST



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

U3A Jazz Appreciation Network

Subject Adviser – Mike Rance

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Hello all,

This is the first Newsletter since I took over from my esteemed predecessor Mike Whitaker. We all owe a large debt to Mike for all the conscientious seven years of work that he put in to help the jazz cause in U3A. I'll be doing well if I get half as much done as he did.

I have really just a couple of points to make, and one item for your diary.

Mike W had put some documents on the U3A website. Although they were not originally transferred to the 'new' website last year, they are there now and can be seen by clicking Resources, scrolling to Jazz Appreciation and clicking there. One document is Mike W's advice on setting up a Jazz Appreciation group. The other document is his last newsletter, sent out in the Summer 2017.

My other message is about guest speakers. Several groups invite speakers to their meetings. In Fleet where I run the JAG, we have a large membership, so, by adding 50p to the session fee, we soon collect enough to pay a jazz musician to join us. We pay them £100, and can afford 3 such guest visits each year. I fully understand that small groups could not possibly afford such an amount, but the face-to-face discussions we have with the top musicians in the country are well worth the effort. We have had the following guests in the past 10 years or so: Alan Barnes, Alyn Shipton, John Etheridge, Art Themen, Guy Barker, Sheila Tracy (now sadly deceased), Scott Stroman (from the Guildhall), Rod Youngs, Kate Williams, Tim Whitehead, Andrew Cleyndert, Nigel Price, Enrico Tomasso, Simon Allen, Karen Sharp, Steve Waterman, Andrea Vicari and Tina May. This is, admittedly, not a Trad-heavy list! If your group is interested in making contact with any of these musicians, I will send contact details. You might also consider working with JAGs in your area, perhaps combining to invite guest speakers.

One group has told me about their guest speakers -- the Windsor U3A Jazz Appreciation Group. Like many other groups in the U3A, the Windsor Group prefers the early jazz styles, but their speakers cover a wide range of interests. The best thing for me to do, I think, is to put you in touch with their convenor, Jacqui Oguzcan -- jacquioguzcan@gmail.com. Or, if you prefer, I will send you Jacqui's list of speakers and their contact details.

I would like to talk to anyone with something to ask or something to tell me about jazz in the U3A. The best way is to email me. In the past 5 months or so, only 20 people have done so. Please don't hesitate to make contact.

Several of the groups I have talked to, and one I have visited, are small, and meet in members' homes using private hi-fi systems. Others I know are large and ambitious (and probably need no advice from me).

I know of one or two JAG members who are available to give presentations to other groups. My initial advice to them is to make contact with U3As in their vicinity (these contacts can be found on the U3A website), and ask the Chairman or Leader to pass on your offer to the JAG in their U3A. You could also tell me, and after I've received a few such offers, I will mention them in a future Newsletter.

My main message is to make sure that all jazz people in U3A learn about this year's Jazz Study Day on 19 September. We have arranged for the master of the saxophone and clarinet, band leader Alan Barnes, to come along with his eight piece all star band to enlighten and entertain us. The first half, in the morning, will be the informative part, with Alan and the band illustrating jazz styles through the years, and taking us through his composing and arranging process. The afternoon session will be a concert performance by Alan and his Octet. Alan's band is – really – the best of the best in jazz. The event will take place in Cecil Sharp House in Camden, London, from 11 am till 4pm. Tickets at £20 will be available in May, from the U3A Website – details will be found on the Events page under 'Educational Events'.

I hope you are all enjoying the jazz you like in U3A

Mike Rance