



# SOURCES

*An Educational Bulletin*

Three issues annually

November 2004/ Issue 23

**WELCOME to Issue 23 of SOURCES**, the U3A Educational Bulletin, with a focus this time around on Physical Activities and Wellbeing. Our leading article has been contributed by the Past Principal of Torbay School of Natural Health and now Chairman of Brixham U3A, Dennis Brett.

Having been a career teacher for most of his working life, Dennis elected to study physical therapy purely for personal and family reasons.

The majority of his students at the School and Clinic which he founded in the wake of this experience were of the 'mature age' bracket. They comprised people looking for a career



change, or ladies looking for an interest with financial prospects after having brought up the children to an independent age. For Dennis it really was almost like an apprenticeship, because after fifteen enjoyable years of the school and clinic, when 'retirement' became an option, U3A made its presence known. The possibility of still being able to enjoy the sharing of skills and knowledge with like-minded people was like the opening of a door upon a second stage of life, but without the hassle of bills and overheads!

In Brixham U3A, Dennis has found the two most popular subjects so far to have been Aromatherapy and Reflexology, but he is leaning towards offering advice in the not too distant future on Nutritional Therapy for supporting the immune function for older people.

*Editor*

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## AROMATHERAPY AS A U3A ACTIVITY

It was decided, notwithstanding my experience in teaching to a professional standard, that for the purposes of involvement in U3A, it was preferable to design short courses that would give a working awareness of the uses of aromatic essential oils in the home, so that the knowledge and skills gained would be perfectly safe for personal use, as well as for family and friends.

The topics covered were based on a foundation of **safe use at all times**, bearing in mind that the essential oils are so concentrated, that in their pure form, they can be toxic unless well diluted, so a 'method of use' worksheet was provided that laid down the proportions of dilution necessary for such purposes as creating air fresheners, use in vaporisers, for inhalation

purposes, in the application of hot/cold compresses, as well as in the bath or footbath.

Only then did we cover several of the different types of essential oils and the anticipated benefits, the worksheets building up into a therapeutic index of relatively common conditions that could be looked at from the lay person's point of view.

It should be stated that when we talk about 'anticipated benefits', not everybody will react in the same way when exposed to a fairly strong aroma, which may be regarded as pleasant by the majority of people, but which a few may find rather repugnant! If this is so, then that specific essential oil should not be used for them, because that part of the brain that associates smell with memory could well have repressed a bad memory in the past and associated it with a specific odour, and the person can feel very upset and anxious when this association takes place. This is the last thing that we want, if we are trying to help a person to relax!

A simple massage routine for arthritic hands was demonstrated and practised, also a good neck and shoulder massage, which was well received by the members of the groups; we find many people of 'advancing years' suffer from stiffness in the muscles of the neck and upper shoulder region, which certainly can inhibit the general circulation of blood to the brain, leading to headaches at the very least.

The short courses take about six periods, spread out over twelve weeks, so there is plenty of time to absorb the information, and try out a little practice as well. There is always plenty of enthusiasm from the ladies, perhaps a little bit less from the men, but then nice smells are perhaps more of a ladies' thing!

If any U3A Branch considers looking at any of the natural therapies as an interest or activity, **please** do make sure that your tutor is qualified in the subject, as even the natural therapies can be quite harmful if misused (or overused!).

## REFLEXOLOGY AS A U3A ACTIVITY

This has always been a popular subject, because in order to enjoy the benefits of a reflexology treatment, you do not have to take your clothes off, only your shoes and socks! The 'learning' side of the activity is quite intense, because in order to offer anything like a meaningful treatment session, you have to have a good knowledge of the anatomy of the body (what it's made of), as well as the physiology (how it works). Even if this knowledge is kept at a basic level, it is very interesting, and it is surprising how unaware many people are about the miracle of the human body we walk about in all day long.

It should be emphasised that reflexology is **not** a medical treatment, and should **not** be used as a means of diagnosis for specific diseases. Very simply,

reflexology helps to ease the subtle energy flows between the internal organs so that they revitalise and allow the **natural** internal healing mechanisms to get on with their own work efficiently. When practiced with sound medical advice from **your own physician**, reflexology facilitates healing.

Again I would emphasise that it is imperative to find a qualified tutor for this extremely interesting subject, perhaps through an approach to the educational establishments that have evening class tutors on their books. I know there is always the argument that we should not have paid tutors, but if you are going to learn and practise a skill on another person's body, you had better know what you are doing in today's litigious society!

## WHAT ABOUT THE FUTURE?

If we follow the media, in television, radio and newspapers regarding the state of health of the nation, the future outlook looks pretty grim, with developing strains of anti-biotic viruses now being reported by the medical professions, as well as increases in the percentages of life-threatening illnesses amongst the population.

There can hardly be any argument that your body's best natural defence against disease is the immune system, and with greater research into the genetic make-up of the individual, it can also be said that your genes will determine what diseases and medical conditions that your immune systems will resist.

Even though genes are a part of the answer as to whether we can expect (or hope for) a long and healthy life, or whether we could possibly succumb to a life-threatening disease at an early age, this does not mean that we must be a passive victim of fate. We certainly can make life-style choices that will put the state of our health back into our own hands, **and at any age!**

Scientists and medical authorities will now tell us that the strength of our immune systems **will depend greatly upon our own personal choice of life-style**, and certainly eating well, exercising and reducing stress will greatly improve our chances of combating the effects of pollutants and toxins that surround us in the air that we breathe, the water that we drink, and the food that we eat. Please though, leave a little time for meditation and a little prayer, because spirituality can have a very positive effect on our mental state of health, which too has a very important part to play in enhancing immunity.

The most important choice that we can make in life is to take charge of our own health, and take more responsibility for our own welfare, not just to lean heavily upon the state systems of health care which are underfunded and overstretched. It really is no good waiting until you are at a critical stage, then going to the consultant and saying, "I've got a problem, and what are you going to do about it?"

The answer may well be: "If you have a problem, what have **you** been doing for the past few years about it?"

There are many opinions as to how we can achieve a state of 'active immunity', whereby our own body systems will remain in balance, and capable of resisting invasive organisms, too many to mention here in detail. There is a wealth of information available, but we have to be honest with ourselves and admit that if we feel reasonably healthy now, **are we really dedicated enough to look for, and act upon the information that could ensure a relatively mobile and pain free life-style in our happy years?**

If the answer is yes, then I look forward to meeting many of you in the distant future when we can compare our 'Queen's Telegram' at the U3A centenarians' conference!

*Dennis Brett  
Brixham U3A*

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## IN THIS ISSUE

Apart from a healthy sprinkling of articles on activities contributing to physical wellbeing, this issue contains a generous mixture of other topics, ranging from news of a Virtual (online) U3A, still in the experimental stage, to news of Summer Schools. There are intriguing insights into study groups from all over the country and a mention for an authoritative new book detailing the history of U3A in the UK and other snippets to inform and entertain. Thank you to all our contributors. This is almost a bumper issue. We hope that Issue 24, due out in March next year, with Science as the main theme, will be at least the same.

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## VACANCY!

**W**ith much regret, I have to announce my decision to step down as Editor of SOURCES following the March 2005 Issue (No.24). The search is therefore on for a replacement and I would urge all readers to do their best to help find someone to take over the reins.



As the third Editor since Issue No.1 back in August 1998, I shall have overseen nine issues, spanning three years. It therefore seems right that someone else should have a chance to fill this role.

By making this announcement now, the Editorial Panel and I hope that a volunteer will step forward in time to shadow me throughout the period

of producing Issue 24 and thus help to ensure a smoother transition. I will undertake to provide the maximum possible support to my successor.

Producing SOURCES is an extremely rewarding job and a very agreeable way of making a contribution to the U3A movement. While it is true to say that a certain level of computer skills is essential, there is no requirement for a background in publishing. The Editor of SOURCES is superbly supported and assisted by the Editorial Panel in the composition and proof reading of each issue.

I would be delighted to discuss in much greater detail, over the phone, the nature of the task and look forward to being *besieged* with calls. May I ask you all to put out some feelers amongst your U3A friends and acquaintances (especially existing Newsletter Editors).

*Mike Williams (Editor)  
Tel: 01424 732364, Email: mikandel@tesco.net*

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## A U3A TACKLES DARTMOOR

**H**ere we are at 9.30a.m. on a Monday morning and up to eighteen members of the walking group are assembling. Car sharing is quickly arranged and in 5 minutes we are on the edge of Dartmoor. It is usual to drive up to half an hour right into the heart of the moor. Walkers carry wet weather gear, a bottle of water, a flask of a hot drink and a packed lunch.

Walking in pairs it falls naturally to change one's walking partner at stiles, crossing streams etc. Conversation flows as every subject under the sun is aired. What has been going on during the week, holidays, families, local and world events, each other's welfare, sometimes fashion, not the High Street kind but the latest in walking gear. This may prompt a visit to the local Outdoor Shop during the following week where, because we are a recognised walking group, 10% discount is given. But no gossip, there is no time for that!

Come 10.50a.m. and murmurs of coffee are heard within the ranks but the leader of the day will have this in hand. Weather permitting perhaps on the top of a Tor with an expanse of Dartmoor spreading for miles. If cold or windy lower down in the shelter of a rock. The walk will be circular and by around 1.00p.m. appetites will be sharpened and once again a suitable place found for lunch, the weather dictating how long we linger. Sometimes it can be half an hour, we may have passed settlements from bygone times when life was indeed very hard and primitive and we compare the different way of life, and muse how fortunate we are.

But we are not fair weather walkers only and at times the wind and rain can be very intense and the stop merely tops up our energy levels. The main part of the walk will have been completed and we head back to the cars and home reaching our homesteads at about 2.30p.m. Sometimes there are wet clothes to dry, boots to clean, the Ordnance Survey map to pore over to check where we have been and personal logs to fill in. Time for a cup of tea and relax and perhaps a little closing of the eyes. As the average age of the group is 70+ that is most emphatically permitted!

*Eileen Hooper, West Dartmoor U.3.A.*

## CORNWALL REVEALS ITSELF

In 1987 I bought a small detached bungalow on the cliffs overlooking the sea and Perranporth beach. I was 57 and living on my own. I responded to an article in the local newspaper to join a newly formed organisation for retired people called U3A. When I arrived at the designated venue only founder members were there and I was about to turn on my heels and make for the exit when I was halted at the door.

"May we have your interests, please?" I was politely asked.

"Walking," I replied.

My assailant removed his arm from the doorway. "Would you like to form a group and lead them?"

A mild sense of panic set in. "Er, no thanks, I have only just moved down here, and I don't know any walks."

I could clearly see that this was not going to be accepted as an excuse.

By now other people were arriving and having been asked to organise a ramblers group, I sat them down and took their names and addresses. I began to feel in control.

"We will meet every Friday morning come hail, rain, or snow at 10.30am and wait a further 10 minutes for latecomers. No dogs please. We will restrict each walk to 3-4miles". This firm announcement appeared to be accepted without question.



Our very first walk was successful. 3 people turned up and we finished the walk with a pub lunch. It was now necessary to arm myself with books on walks, to read them and, of course, reconnoitre them first. Also I realised I would be required to know something about the places we were to visit. Cornwall's rich heritage then burst over me like a festoon of fireworks. The Fox family, the importation of gunpowder for the mines, the mining of tin and copper, the wonderful houses now approachable through the National Trust, the steam railways - all had to be explored. A new world had opened up and I had to know the answers to the many questions I could be asked.

As the U3A membership grew, so did my walking group. Since the beginning of the decade the group is now attended by as many as 45 people. I gave up the leadership after 4 years and most of the walkers are happy to take their turn at suggesting walks and leading them.

It still amazes me that as a result of a simple visit to Truro I now enjoy the company of people from all the surrounding districts including Falmouth. Furthermore, with all the lovely walks in Cornwall many of us bring our cameras, (we are in no hurry), and print out the pictures we take on our computers to send to each other.

Now that I am 75 (one member is aged 90) I sometimes feel like missing a week and make several excuses to myself about not going. Other elderly walkers have expressed similar feelings. But this is fatal. To be strong willed and go means that age and depression melt away like spring snow the moment you leave your front door. You are now in

God's fresh air on the way to meet your friends and afterwards you are always pleased you went.

*Stanley John Gray  
Carrick U3A*



## SNAP'N'STROLL GROUP

The decision to combine Photography and Walking interests to form our 'Snap'n' Stroll' Group has proved beneficial to the less agile and near octogenarian members, who are now able to participate in gentle rambles of around one and a half to two hours duration, often concluding with a convivial pub lunch.

The Group has about 10 to 12 regular members and the Group Leader is a talented photographer (her entry won the U3A News Magazine Photographer of the Year Award 2003 and it is featured on the front cover of the March 2004 edition of the Magazine), who is always available to offer advice on choice of subject, and on how to improve our snapshots.

The meetings take place at monthly intervals, weather permitting, and the areas covered so far have been varied and interesting, providing many photographic subjects and opportunities to enjoy the beauties of the countryside. Visits have been made to a beautiful Arboretum, with its extensive woodland walks and its working farm, and to several local nature reserves - the February "Snowdrops Walk" and the May "Bluebells Walk" were of particular interest. Also enjoyed by all was the visit to Witley Court, a 17<sup>th</sup> century country estate, with its Victorian mansion created for the 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Dudley. It is currently notable for its monumental 120-jet Perseus & Andromeda fountain, once the biggest in Europe, and for its Sculpture Park, where works by Frank, Armitage and Antony Gormley are included in the permanent collection.

The future programme includes a proposed riverside walk along the Severn, combined with a journey on The Severn Valley Railway private steam train from Arley to Trimpey. One can envisage many subjects worthy of photographing on that visit and it is possible that an exhibition of our efforts throughout the year may be arranged for the annual Social Event at Christmas-time. As ours is a **combined** Photography + Walking Group, it is not a requirement to own a camera to enjoy being a member of this aptly named 'Snap'n' Stroll' Group.

*Kingswinford U3A*



## WALKING WITH A SEEING EYE

This is the title I chose for a course I ran at the 2004 U3A Summer School, because I have long felt that walks in the country can be made more interesting if some effort is made to let participants know of what lies around them and sometimes beneath them during a walk. The recent survey of U3A study groups has shown how popular walking is as a U3A activity. So, I sought to show at Cheltenham that, quite apart from the exercise and good company engendered by a U3A walk, one that is well prepared and undertaken with a "seeing eye" can be made more memorable than it might otherwise be.

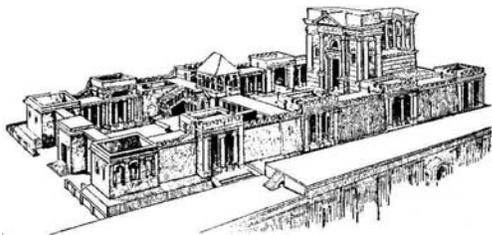
It can be illuminated by brief descriptions of:

- the environment, natural history, geology of the locality
- the social history of the area and the industrial and agricultural activity pursued there over the centuries
- the historical background, as represented by ancient hill forts, castles, historic battle sites and so on and
- the varying nature of the architecture one is passing

The importance of this was brought home to me when leading a walk which passed through a garden. The lady of the house called to us to let us know that the pond we could see in her garden was in fact a Mediaeval Retting Pond. (For flax to be usable in making linen, the flesh surrounding the internal fibres had to be rotted, i.e. retted, off and this required it to be left in a retting pond for some weeks). She had won an award for refurbishing her pond. And, with her help, our “seeing eye” had been shown that there was much more to the garden pond than was obvious. So, my theme is all about what lies beneath the surface of a walk, what might easily be missed.

Our first walk at Cheltenham was chosen to illustrate the geology of the area. We walked along the limestone edge or scarp, containing as it does layers of Greater Oolite and Inferior Oolite, the former being a hard white rock, which is among the finest of building materials. We saw evidence of extensive quarrying of these rocks, used to build Blenheim, Eton College and Windsor Castle among others. We also visited two Iron Age Forts at Crickley Hill and Leckhampton.

One variant on the notion of “walking with a seeing eye” has recently been introduced in my own U3A. We arrange to undertake “private study” of a local village or town, its history, architecture, industry etc., to meet to discuss and pool the outcome of our research and then to visit the village and to walk around it with our better informed “seeing eye”. This too has led to some very interesting findings and visits and an enhanced knowledge of our neighbourhood.



The sources available for studying the background to a walk or visit are numerous. Even Ordnance Survey maps provide the first clues with their references to hill forts and burial mounds, and the sites of old castles, mills and quarries. Many books of local walks, describe background features of the kind discussed. Most County Councils and many local preservation societies have web sites, which pick out such matters of interest. And there are of course many books published about towns and villages, churches and country houses; a local library is bound to have an extensive collection. Examples are books by Pevsner and others on

*The Buildings of England* (one or two volumes for each county) and Arthur Mee's *The King's England*, county by county. Most local churches have researched their own history and publish leaflets. So, there is a wealth of material available.

My message, then, to those with an interest in the country we live in is to plan walks and visits so as to encourage the use of a “seeing eye.”

Ivor Manley, Farnborough U3A



## IN THE NEXT ISSUE

The next issue of *SOURCES* (No.24) will be mailed to those on the database in March 2005. The special theme for this issue will be **SCIENCE** of all kinds.

**Please submit contributions to *SOURCES* via the National Office (see back page for address) or by email to [mikandel@tesco.net](mailto:mikandel@tesco.net) not later than 8th January 2005.**

Looking ahead to Issue 25 (June 2005), the focus will be on LANGUAGES. As well as dealing with the more popular languages, we look forward to hearing something about the more unusual ones.

Despite the fact that *SOURCES* is always declared as having an overarching theme for any given issue, prospective contributors should not feel discouraged from sending in other offerings. The Editorial Board welcomes articles of interest that will serve to vary the diet on offer and make each issue a little more wide-ranging than the thematic approach might imply.

U3A members may receive *SOURCES* at home, free of charge, by completing an official subscription form (obtainable either through their local Committee or from National Office) and submitting it to National Office. Please mark the envelope ‘Sources Subscription’. As an experiment., it is also possible to subscribe online at [u3a.org.uk](http://u3a.org.uk)

**For technical reasons, the Editor will be more than grateful for contributions that take the form (in order of preference) of (a) a file on a floppy disk (b) an email ([mikandel@tesco.net](mailto:mikandel@tesco.net)) or (c) clean typescript suitable for scanning – but please do not feel bashful about submitting other forms of contribution. It may not always prove possible to send out an acknowledgment, though every effort will be made to do so. Contributions are considered for inclusion by an Editorial Panel (including the Editor!).**



## HELP SPREAD THE GOOD WORD

If you are the only person in your U3A (or one of very few) to be receiving this Educational Bulletin, you may well be aware that this is the case. *SOURCES* would be grateful for your assistance in bringing it to a wider audience. When publicising, please be kind enough to mention that applications should be made on an individual, not a block, basis and that the official subscription form is available from National Office. U3As might like to distribute photocopies of the form locally.

## RAMBLING

**"mens sana in corpore sano"**  
**(Juvenal *Satires*)**

“The grass wraps my feet in sodden poultice”. Thus wrote Thomas Hardy. Those of us who go out into the countryside know that there are few days when the grass is not wet. Even in summer the early and late dews will wet the feet unless we are wearing waterproof footwear. Consider the plight of thousands and thousands of poor, country folk who toiled in the fields from dawn until dusk for a few shillings a week. Until the U.S. inventor accidentally discovered the process of vulcanization in 1839, anyone walking in grassland, over heather-clad heath and boggy moor and through crops, will have suffered from cold and wet feet.

When we formed our U3A five years ago I was asked to be the walks group leader. I soon found that walkers fell into two categories – either strollers or serious walkers – my preference was for the latter. Then there was the matter of proper gear, stout boots and waterproof clothing, not to mention a trekking pole to take the strain off the knees and keep one's balance. On one walk I found myself supporting two ladies who were wearing only soft soled shoes, the downland grass was close cropped and slippery. After that I would not allow anyone not suitably shod to come on the walk. The group was very popular, too popular, and so I persuaded a colleague to be short walks leader while I remained the long walks leader.

Apart from wearing proper clothing I became concerned for the safety of the group members. My wife and I always carried a first aid kit and a mobile phone. Then on one walk we were faced with a real emergency. The member who had planned the walk fainted, the first mobile phone produced was flat but luckily another member's was OK and we dialed 999. In no time a paramedic was in touch asking for the grid reference. Our sick colleague, who was drifting in and out of consciousness, was the first to provide it!

A number of walkers from both groups suggested that we should lay on a map reading course. We always identify our starting point with a grid reference and a brief description of where to park. Walking is fun and no more so than when one is accompanied by a dog. So we do allow dogs at the discretion of the walk leader. We are blessed in Chinnor being on the scarp of the Chilterns with its network of paths well way-marked and maintained by the Chiltern Society. At the foot of the Chilterns are what my wife and I call the flatlands. They extend across the Oxfordshire plain to the Cotswolds. So the choice is between a good tough walk up into the Chiltern Hills or a flatter but no less exhilarating one.

For the serious walker Ramblers and Open Spaces Society publication 'Rights of Way' – a guide to law and practice by John Riddall and John Trevelyan - is a must whilst Marion Shoard's 'A Right to Roam' (Oxfordshire University Press) is of general interest. A pedometer is fun but use a map measurer to calculate the distance to be walked. Always take a drink and some light refreshment.

*Clive Bray, Chinnor & District U3A*



## GETTING PHYSICAL IN EVESHAM

We have five walking groups in order to cater for all abilities. In all of them friendships have developed, where joys can be shared and sorrows comforted, whilst strolling or walking in beautiful countryside or pleasant villages. Facts of all descriptions can be learnt and nature appreciated.

Several of our members who enjoy walking but can no longer walk a long distance, formed a Village Ambles Group. This group walk for 1½ to 2 hours round a village enjoying themselves and exploring the village. This group also appeals to members who have only recently arrived in the area and who would like to learn about our beautiful villages. The Village Ambles group became so popular that a new group called Village Strolls was formed with a different leader. Again this group grew until another group, Village Strolls 2 was formed, with identical walks but held on a different day. All three groups meet together occasionally to share their enjoyment.

We have a small Golf group led by a recently retired gentleman, whose wife wondered what he would do with his spare time! Joining U3A, learning to play golf and becoming a leader has given him new interests and new friends.

We have a thriving Skittles Group lead by a member who is registered partially sighted. To play in one of our skittles meetings is a real tonic! It is a pleasure to hear a group of members laughing with one another. Cheers are to be heard whether a score of 11 or 0 is achieved.

One of our newest groups, Short Mat Bowls, will start bowling in September. We already have 16 members signed up to play, lifts have been arranged and score cards purchased. There is no doubt that this group will be as friendly and as enjoyable as any of the others. We are in the process of forming an American Square Dance group where music and exercise can be enjoyed in the company of friends.

One of our members, Clive Bostle, has supplied the article that follows.

*Judith Smart, Interest Group Coordinator  
Evesham & District U3A*



## OVER 4 MILE WALKS

There is a considerable literature on the physical health benefits of walking. For an introduction to the subject see, for example, the "Walking the Way to Health" website - [www.whi.org.uk](http://www.whi.org.uk) or the book "Walking for Health" by Dr. William Bird & Veronica Reynolds (Carroll & Brown, 2002).

There is rather less information on the spiritual and emotional benefits, almost certainly because these are much more subjective and much less easy to quantify. Bird & Reynolds (op.cit.) do include a short section ("The Emotional Benefits") in their book, where they discuss the beneficial effect of walking on stress, anxiety, depression, relationships and promoting the "lifting of the spirit" generally. They also draw attention to the social benefits of walking, particularly of walking in a group and the opportunities for social interaction that this brings.

Quite rightly, however, they also emphasise the benefits of solitary walking which they suggest offers an opportunity

for people to "get in touch with their spiritual side...Solitary walking, ideally in a beautiful and tranquil setting, can be a time for meditation and prayer, away from the pressures of daily life..."

This last point will be very familiar to anyone who has leafed through the programmes of retreat houses. Nearly all of them - certainly those in country settings - offer short or long retreats either with walking being an optional and informal activity that can be undertaken as an part of a broader retreat theme or ones with a specific and focussed emphasis on walking as the "core" of the retreat.

Very recently here in Worcestershire a major report "Worcestershire Countryside Access and Recreation Strategy - Final Report" (Worcestershire County Council Countryside Service, March 2004) includes a chapter on "Health and Well-being" (pp.39-42) and says this at para. 5:58: "It is not just physical health benefits that are associated with access to the countryside. For many people the enjoyment of their activity can be connected to a sense of achievement. It may also provide opportunities to relax, find peace and inspiration and contemplation; thus improving the sense of well-being. In addition numerous educational benefits can be gained."

Taking up this "education" theme, many writers have promoted walking as the only real way to see the countryside in all its facets and to begin to understand our landscape and its history. For example, anyone wanting to study such subjects as historic landscapes and woodlands, enclosure, Roman roads, lost villages, commons, stone circles, hillforts, estate boundaries, parish churches, Anglo-Saxon charter bounds, water meadows or hedgerows (and a hundred and one other such topics) has to do it largely on foot! By successfully doing so, they will have greatly increased their sense of enjoyment, pleasure and self-reliance (including perhaps a new-found ability to use a map and compass to navigate properly) and thus self-esteem and thus...well you can insert your own conclusions here!

Oh, and a gentle stroll to gather some blackberries or field mushrooms can be great fun too!

Final thought: "The trend of twentieth-century walking has been in the direction of greater independence of spirit and freedom from convention" from: Morris Marples: "Shanks's Pony: a study of walking" (Country Book Club. 1960), p 172.

*Clive Bostle, Evesham & District U3A*

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## WALKING IN KENT

**B**romley U3A has had a walking group for over 10 years, which seems most attractive to the 50-70 year olds. Although many U3A members express an interest in walking, often because of a sedentary working lifestyle, they are unable to sustain walks of more than about four miles at a gentle pace. Nevertheless, we have been able to run a regular programme for a loyal core of members. Walks are at fortnightly intervals, led by a small team of leaders who take it in turn to arrange the walks.

In this area of South East London we have easy access to an interesting variety of terrain, ranging from the urban London Docklands, Canals, Thames Path and the Royal Parks. Close at hand we have the glorious Kent countryside with its orchards, hop gardens and unspoiled woodland,

carpeted with bluebells in the Spring. Most of our walks start at 10 or 10.30 am, often from a pub car park, permission having been obtained from the landlord on the understanding that members will avail themselves of the facilities (not just the loos!). We try to arrange shared transport for those without cars, and for City walks the over 60's have their Freedom Pass, so transport is not a problem. Walks are usually circular and could include part of a long distance path like the Saxon Shore Way, North Downs Way or Vanguard Way, all within reasonable distance. Walks are well marked and maintained, some riverside, woodland and park land with grazing deer. In early Summer there always seems to be one or two paths blocked with brambles and nettles (ouch!). Whoever brought the secateurs leads the way!

On the social side we have enjoyed treasure hunts and of course the Christmas lunch, preceded by a morning walk, always proves very popular. Walking holidays both at home and abroad have been enjoyed by groups or our members. Both Ramblers and HF Holidays arrange walking holidays to many attractive destinations. Together with a party of friends one is able to walk in places well away from the usual tourist destinations, with a comfortable hotel to relax in afterwards.

In addition to publishing the walks in our own U3A Bromley News, a quarterly Walkers Newsletter is sent out to over 80 members where we give details of forthcoming walks, events and holidays. Varying the days gives everyone an opportunity to come along, with an average attendance of 20 or so walkers. As this is an "open" group anyone can come along if they wish to enjoy a more active lifestyle and the beautiful Kent countryside.

*Neill Trueman and Bob Boyd, Bromley U3A*

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## BIRDWATCHING IN ESSEX

**L**eadng our Birdwatching Group was completely unintentional on my part. I merely said, on seeing the report in Third Age News of Joy Soanes's new national Birding Network, that I wished we had a birdwatching group. "Well, start one!" I was told, unequivocally.

So with the seed thus sown, and help and encouragement from other enthusiasts, we came into existence with not an expert among us. We live in a county with fabulous birding venues within reasonable reach, shore and reservoirs, rivers and marshes, ancient woods and newly created reserves on wasteland. Once the regular visits were organized we began to absorb knowledge of birds like sponges. Those who joined all had an interest in wildlife and the environment, and we found ourselves evolving into almost a natural history group, finding interest in trees and plants, animals and insects even when the birds remained obstinately out of sight. On one splendid occasion recently, the warden moved some carefully placed corrugated iron sheets to show us all three species of snake coiled beneath in the heat.

We began by arranging meetings with wildlife reserve wardens who are unfailingly friendly and informative then, as our knowledge and confidence increased, made plans to visit places on our own, always well prepared for changing weather and plans for a pub lunch perhaps if we are out all day. We diversified with a trip up the River Crouch on a converted barge, passing flotillas of waterfowl and mooring

in the estuary to watch the seals watching us. We spent a hilarious weekend squeezed into bunks on a converted lightship where we watched the sunrise at 7am lighting the wings of great flocks of golden plovers wheeling above. We visit the winter spectacular of the Swan Fly-in, when hundreds of wild swans descend through the dusk to roost on the lagoon below the hide, a breathtaking sight.

At Minsmere reserve, when the notoriously elusive bittern emerged with ponderous stealth from the reeds into full view, the frenzied whispers of patient watchers in the hide reached fever pitch. At Fingringhoe, Essex Wildlife Trust's flagship on the coast, where we spent the day to hear the nightingales in the evening, we had the delight of hearing them sing around us all day long.

When Joy ran Birdwatching at York Summer School we eagerly participated, joining her again at Chester the next year. From York we visited Bempton Cliffs where we peered down at the staggering sight of the sea-bird colony occupying every dangerous ledge beneath us; thousands of vanilla-headed gannets, razorbills, comic puffins and an overpowering reek of guano! The following year Joy had to extend a week in a Welsh farmhouse to a second week to accommodate the number of members wanting to come. It was a magic week of watery green woods and bluebells, dippers on the streams, spotted flycatchers in the hedges and the magnificent red kite then taking mastery of the skies in the West country.

Since then we have arranged three successful holidays for ourselves, in a smugglers inn in Norfolk where we had sole occupancy of the annexe and saw our first ring ousel; to Dorset in a charming hotel in Lulworth Cove, in a week of perfect summer weather in March, discovering Brownsea Island's hidden joys, and the rewarding wildlife sites cheek by jowl along the south coast. By last year, when we stayed at Kent University for a week, our numbers had swelled to eighteen, and for the second year, not all from our U3A. Several members of Maldon and later Thurrock had joined our meetings while getting their own group up and running, and we enjoy the return pleasure of being invited to the sites they have discovered.

Not every meeting rewards us with rarities - far from it. But we are not 'twitchers', we are quite happy seeing half a dozen familiar birds and watching them in more detail, once in the local hills dense morning fog put down every bird in the district; then a visit to Landguard in Suffolk watching the ringing gave us the electric experience of seeing the first miniature yellow browed warbler (all of 6 grams) to arrive there for 14 years.

We are getting older, we adjust our visits to our abilities, but we are as fervent in our dedication to this fulfilling activity as when we began, and as new members soon become. It only needs two or three people to make the decision, one which you will never regret as others are attracted to one of the fastest growing interests in the country. Go on, start a group!

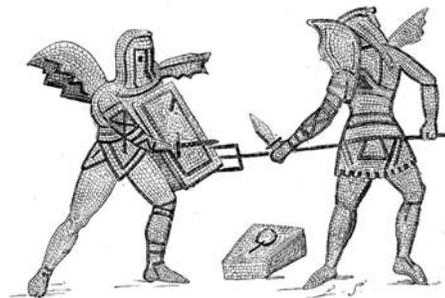
*Freda Hussey, Basildon & Billericay U3A*



## MOTIVATING MOBILITY FOR MEN

**W**hen I first joined Pembrokeshire U3A I was surprised and delighted by the range of physical activities included in its programme. I joined a

“Stretch for Health” group run by a professionally trained ballet dancer and choreographer, and a newly formed Yoga group. All too often I found I was the only male in a group of at least ten although our total male membership probably exceeded one hundred. I became convinced that our men were put off by fear of embarrassment when joining a class of fitter, more flexible ladies. I also believed that most would benefit from increased gentle physical activity.



Realising that I was performing “an illegal operation” I proposed at a Business Meeting and in the bi-monthly Newsletter setting up a gentle exercise class, “Mobility for Men.” On the first morning two others turned up and they remain loyal members. A week later there were four and gradually we grew to average seven. A new member was a qualified masseur and he was soon involved as a second leader to add variety and interest to our exercise programme.

I continued to attend the “Stretch for Health” class. There I spotted a newcomer – a lady – with the movement of a trained dancer who had recently qualified in Pilates\* and was about to take the “Extend Course” training. Here was a talent too able to ignore and fortunately she agreed to lead some of our classes. When I suggested to our group that we invite a new Lady Leader there was unanimous approval. She was an instant success and I was able to step back into participating with the happy feeling that our introduction of a lady tutor had helped legalise our meetings. Membership increased and we are now regularly into double figures.

Our exercise class ends with relaxation and a coffee break, which round off a most enjoyable morning. This socialising has also offered therapy to needy members in our group. Another pleasing development is that I am no longer a lone male at “Stretch for Health.” Several others having gained confidence now join a second weekly exercise class.

\* An exercise programme

*Sam Jones, Pembrokeshire U3A*



## TAI CHI IN PETERBOROUGH

**H**aving had recourse to payments to find a tutor, a controversy much discussed by the Third Age Trust at AGMs and letters to U3A News, on the subject of paying for classes, we went ahead two years ago with our Tai Chi group. Unable to find a tutor within our membership and with insurance difficulties at venues, we conducted discussions on the question of payment for a class, for the first time in our U3A. In this case, it was overwhelmingly agreed!

Under our excellent tutor, Sheila Lum, who has become a friend to everyone, our members benefit from her knowledge of the health aspects attributed to Tai Chi. By September, Sheila will have returned from China and we

shall once again, with enthusiasm, return and welcome new members. She has written a few words for SOURCES outlining the benefits of Tai Chi.

*Jill Wright, Peterborough U3A*

Tai Chi is a form of slow, graceful and gentle Chinese Exercise. The Tai Chi Form is a set sequence of moves, and most classes spend time learning the sequence and also doing exercises. Tai Chi is being practised increasingly for its benefits. The essence of Tai Chi is to enable Chi (a life giving energy/force) to flow more freely. As students learn to move, opening up rather than having the arms tight to the body, it helps all the circulation systems to work better including the Lymph and Blood Systems.

The National Health Service has recognized Tai Chi's proven benefit in improving people's balance and is introducing it at Fall Prevention Clinics. Tai Chi has also been recommended for people with arthritis. People do Tai Chi for other reasons as well. It helps you learn to relax your body so it can help with stress and help with reducing tension in shoulders and arms. It can improve breathing, help to reduce blood pressure and even help people have a good nights sleep. Being more rested means greater stamina during the day. As it is gentle, people who might find more strenuous activities too much can do Tai Chi. It can help with walking, with flexibility, loosens the joints, while some people find it gives them more energy.

I have been teaching Tai Chi full time and that has given me experience of working with many people - including some with Parkinsons Disease, the elderly in a sheltered housing complex and people with Learning Disabilities. You don't need any special clothes, just comfortable flat shoes and loose trousers. Some students who are doing Section 1 rather than all 3 sections prefer to continue to wear skirts or dresses. The important thing with Tai Chi is to find a tutor who can teach to suit the group concerned. Some tutors run classes where more attention is paid to its martial arts background and time is spent on how the moves can be applied.

*Sheila Lum*



## RESOURCE CENTRE NEWS

This is not the first time we have focused on physical activities in SOURCES but we hope in this issue to concentrate especially on those activities which have some impact also on the spiritual or intellectual wellbeing of the individual. The Resource Centre has a range of materials to help with activities of this kind. We have videos for groups interested in Tai Chi, for example, which can be used by beginners and groups without a specialist instructor. Tai Chi claims to be a gentle way to feel fitter and to improve suppleness while also promoting relaxation and natural healing of the body. We have a further selection of exercise videos, of all types and levels, which are suitable for older people, including one 'Exercise in a Chair' which is ideal for members with greatly reduced mobility.

If you have a group interested in holistic treatments we have several videos on massage and reflexology and one on the use of aromatherapy, this has a useful section on how to mix and blend essential oils and how to apply lotions on yourself to help common ailments. We also have videos on

certain conditions, which can be treated by complementary medicines, such as asthma, allergies and back pain.

We have a pack of audiocassettes and a printed manual which explain how you can learn to meditate your way to a happier and healthier life using the CSM (Clinically Standardized Meditation) system and which was recommended to us by a U3A group leader as ideal for beginners as well as more experienced groups.

## DANCE

A popular form of exercise in U3A is dancing and we now have a new subject network co-ordinator for Folk Dancing: Roy Phillips. At his recommendation the Resource Centre has acquired some music CDs specially produced for folk dance groups. The 'Welcome to the Dance' CD has a booklet with all the instructions needed to create 41 different folk dances so even if you have never tried them before you could still attempt some of the easier ones without an instructor. It might be fun to try something new and get Christmas parties going with a swing!

## GARDENING

At this time of year the gardening groups use our videos very heavily while they cannot get out of doors to visit the real thing. I have ordered a number of new videos to supplement the existing collection and the new gardening list is available, free, to anyone planning meetings for the winter. We now have 52 gardening videos, as well as a large selection of slides of various well-known gardens, so there is plenty to choose from.

## WALKING

There are numerous walking groups in the U3A and most of them seem to go out whatever the weather, but if you are unable to continue your walks during very bad weather conditions we do have some videos of well known walks such as the South Downs Way or the Coast to Coast walk (from St Bees Head in Cumbria to Robin Hood's bay in North Yorkshire) available for loan.



Isabel Markham, the Geology network co-ordinator, and Bexley U3A have walked the entire Thames, from Greenwich to the source, over a period of two years and a pack of details and maps on how they did it has been deposited in the Resource centre for anyone who is interested in trying something similar. It is a simple but original way of walking long distances in short stretches using public transport to get to and from the start and end points and could be adapted for any long path in Britain. Bexley U3A are currently walking from London to Birmingham, along canal paths, using this method and a pack on this will be deposited in the Resource Centre when they have completed it. Please contact Isabel Markham or me for further information.

## ORNITHOLOGY

Bird watching groups have been able to borrow relevant slides and videos from the Resource Centre for several years, but our newest additions to stock are recordings of bird sounds on CD. There are two: both from the National Sound Archive of the British Library. One is British bird sounds and the other is songs of garden birds. Like the gardening groups birdwatchers in U3A often come indoors for the winter so anyone wanting a full list of stock to help plan the winter programme should apply to the address below.

*Elizabeth Gibson, Resource Centre Manager, Third Age Trust  
The Old Municipal Buildings, 19 East Street Bromley Kent BR1*

*1QH*

*Tel: 020 8315 0199 (Tuesdays and Thursdays only)*

*E-mail: resourcecentre@u3a.org.uk*



## ● THE LANGUAGE SPOT

**T**RUCKER TALK is the jargon of American truck drivers using CB (citizen band) radio. Here are a few examples with their 'translations' in brackets: *anklebiters* (children), *motion lotion* (petrol), *five finger discount* (stolen goods), *super cola* (beer), *rubber duck* (the first vehicle in a convoy), *eyeballs* (headlights) and *grandma lane* (slow lane).

*Editor*



## FAMILY HISTORY IN YORK

**T**he Family History Self-Help Group was formed in spring 2002, initially meeting monthly in a classroom environment with a degree of low-key tuition and short talks, some by members but mostly by the leader. This proved too formal, not to mention hard work for the leader, with little opportunity to chat and share ideas. One of the members kindly offered the use of her home and also became co-leader and the new style gatherings are working well, so well that we have to run two sessions on meeting days to accommodate everyone!

Apart from any notices, meetings are now simply a get-together of like-minded souls who can exchange news, ideas and sources informally or do some individual research, with low key tuition available if required. As members are a mix of experienced FH-ers and newcomers, all with different aims in their own research, some using computers, some not, this seems to work well. Some months, instead of a meeting, we organise visits, for example to the city reference library, the city archives, the LDS library, the Minster library or the Victorian cemetery.

The group does not offer formal tuition. Newcomers are offered informal "this is how we did it" sessions and a lot of help along the way but we recommend they attend formal FE/WEA classes as well.

Our resources are quite good. We offer internet access (and guidance) and have a second PC to access CD-ROMS, plus a microfiche reader and several fiches, mostly of the York area. Members pay a small charge which allows us to buy occasional books for our "trust" library. They also kindly

donate FH magazines, fiches etc. We have started to build our own Members Interest file and already have a couple of shared surnames and several common locations amongst 25 or so members. This has meant members have been able to share a lot of useful "Where to Search" advice and this is proving useful.

We also suggest that everyone joins the York FH Society, thus giving free access to their excellent Study Centre and, in effect, boosting our own resources very easily. As one of the leaders is a volunteer at the Study Centre this cooperation is easily organised.

The group seems to work well in its present format. This year any newcomers will be started off in the autumn and then the group will meet again in the New Year.

*Mrs M E Leath, York U3A*



## EAST MIDLANDS U3A RESIDENTIAL SUMMER SCHOOL at Harlaxton Manor – 11/14 July

**F**or the second year in succession, U3A members enjoyed three nights in this beautiful 19<sup>th</sup> century country house, furnished as a residential college and conference centre.



Situated near Grantham and one mile from the A1, The Manor is presently owned by the University

of Evansville, Indiana, USA who keep its outstanding public rooms in an immaculate state of repair. We used rooms such as the Gold Room, The Conservatory, The Long Gallery and the State Dining Room for some of our lectures and even included a banquet on the last evening which was held in the Great Hall. Members found that attending the Summer School gave them an opportunity to relax and enjoy the exclusive use of Harlaxton Manor whilst studying the course of their choice.

This year the list of courses was impressive – Czech Music with Anthony Burton, Art for All with a well known local tutor, Digital Photography, IT skills for the beginner and The Making of Tudor England. A total of 101 students attended with 75% coming from the East Midlands Region. Next year we plan to double the numbers with a separate three day Harlaxton Summer School run twice in one week. Quotes from the student evaluation forms included:-

'Informal, yet informative – ideal'

'Teaching methods exactly right – relaxed, friendly and inspiring'

'Wonderfully illustrated by someone who was passionate about his subject'

'Wonderful place – excellent organisation – everyone is made to feel so welcome'

'Brilliant – I enjoyed The Manor as much as the course'

**Why did you go on the course?** 'A nice break, a good holiday and friendship'

'A super group of people and a great tutor'

*Rosemary McCulloch, Stamford U3A*

## CZECH MUSIC

Who is Anthony Burton? Pillar of Radio 3, author of notes for over 2000 CDs, presenter of the story of western music for the BBC World Service. What music-lover would not want to hear him play Czech music in such a fantasmagoric setting as Harlaxton Manor?

Among the hundred East Midlands members who attended the 3-day Summer School near Grantham in July, twenty of us listened to excerpts from Czech composers of the 18th and 19th centuries, later concentrating on Dvorak and Janacek.

These are some comments I heard:

- He'd put in a lot of hard work, made a friendly atmosphere and passed on his enthusiasm.
- I learnt a lot, going away wanting more, still whistling those big tunes.
- I could almost cry after years of deprivation of music. It was like a drop of manna.

If there was anything different from what we expect from U3A, one or two of us thought that Anthony was not really comfortable with the audience chipping in – and U3Aers will chip in! He wanted to get through his programme, and most people were happy with that. But there is a lot to know about Czech music which we can't learn from just listening and it was a shame there was so little chance to benefit when we had the horse's mouth right there with us.

A word to organisers thinking of inviting broadcasters: older people learn best by getting involved, questioning and sharing experience. Radio is one way, with a passive audience. When we get together we expect more.

*Tom Chamberlain, Nottingham U3A*



### SOURCES ONLINE

For those of you with access to the Internet, you may find it useful to know that back numbers of Sources can be viewed online, and printed off or bits copied and pasted into your word processor. Visit the Third Age Trust's website at [www.u3a.org.uk](http://www.u3a.org.uk) and click on **Sources Online**. More recent issues require Acrobat Reader which can be downloaded from the website.



## THE NATIONAL U3A SUMMER SCHOOLS

Hundreds of happy experiences is one way of summing up the continuing success of U3A Summer Schools, this year held at Cheltenham (Gloucestershire University campus) – two of them – during the last two weeks of July. Those who attend return home invigorated, inspired, refreshed, enlightened and, above all, tired and happy! The organisers and tutors, all U3A volunteers, do a wonderful job. We have assembled a few comments from the first Summer School which provide a hearty endorsement of these few words of introduction.

My first visit ever to a Summer School, an ambition gloriously achieved through U3A facilities and national network. Thank you, U3A, for all the friends I am making since joining. *Lita (Science)*

Painting for the first time at speed, speaking for one minute without notes, writing a 400-word story and a poem. It was all wonderful! *Mary (Exploring Self-Expression)*

An intensive but rewarding and stimulating time together. *Anon (American Literature)*

Phew! I didn't know that being creative could be so exhausting and yet so rewarding. A holiday (?) with a difference. *Barbara (Embroidery)*

A great opportunity to meet U3A members from all over the country. *Edwin (Architecture)*

A voyage of looking and seeing and understanding. *Eric (Architecture)*

Intensive, exhausting but stimulating and utterly enjoyable. *Anon (Writing)*

Three days of talking to interesting people without having to worry about the chores. *Anon (Poetry)*

A LOVELY experience – I hope I will be able to come again. *Dorothy (Chinese)*

The vitality and curiosity that leads people to gain more and more, sometimes in completely new fields. *Anon*

Deep breaths of a different air. *Marion (Chinese)*

My daughter says I come back looking ten years younger. *Helena (Science)*

Challenging, stimulating, concentrated and exhausting. *Barbara (Exploring Self-Expression)*

Writers from across the country – all charming ladies. *Peter (Writing)*

I have knocked an old woman over, murdered someone, answered a lonely hearts ad and thoroughly enjoyed myself. *Ann (Writing)*

Encouraging, challenging, informative and inspirational. And, oh, what fun we had! *Mouja (Writing)*

Eight inquisitive bodies come to learn what we are made of. *Joy (Genetics)*

7a.m. under a tree – in the rain – learning Chi Kung. An unexpected bonus! *Maggie (Chinese)*

My first visit – but it won't be my last. *Joan (Exploring Self-Expression)*

XIÈ XIÈ JEAN TAÏTAI  
The course was HÉN HÁO  
NIANJIAOYU  
*Anon (Chinese)*

The subject matter was sensational: we took sides but managed to remain good friends and to return to a contemplative state. Some of us were surprised at what we could express and produce with the support of our group and the helmsman. *Eunice (American Literature)*

I want to get up and tell the world that they must try U3A Summer School. Long live literature and thank you all for a wonderful few days. *Patricia (American Literature)*

Here are the dates of next year's National  
Summer Schools  
June 28 – 1 July  
July 19 – July 22



[In the article that follows, Maurice Line of Harrogate U3A challenges us to reflect on the meaning of hope, optimism, contentment and other states of mind. Discussion groups up and down the country will find food for thought in plenty.]

## IS HOPE NECESSARY?

Harrogate U3A has a “Socratic Club”, a small group which meets every month at a member’s house (lunch provided, no hemlock) to discuss in what we hope is a Socratic manner a topic of interest or concern. Topics have included “Is suicide ever wrong?”, “The road of excess leads to the palace of wisdom (Blake)”, “What is wrong with obscurity?” and “All intellectual improvement arises from leisure (Johnson)”. Our last meeting discussed the supposed prayer of St Francis quoted by Mrs Thatcher when she won her first election (it actually dates from 1912): “Where there is discord, may we bring harmony; where there is despair, may we bring hope”. We did not debate whether Mrs Thatcher’s intentions were fulfilled, but focused on hope. An essay on ‘Hope’ by A.C. Grayling, in his book *The meaning of things: applying philosophy to life*, was also used as a basis for discussion. What follows is not a summary of our discussion, though it draws on contributions by several members, but a set of personal observations on hope.

It is generally assumed that everyone needs hope, and that it is what keeps the human spirit alive and healthy. Numerous quotations support this belief: “Where there is no hope the people perish”, “Hope springs eternal in the human breast”, and so on. Hope is considered by many to be a cardinal virtue. Despair, on the other hand, is disastrous, and probably a sin.

We all know optimists and pessimists. I think we confuse optimism and hopefulness. An optimist is to me one who sees him/herself as being in a generally good situation, not one who Micawber-like hopes for something good to happen. Likewise, the pessimist sees everything around in a bad light. Both experience their different feelings in a present situation, in the here and now. They are people of different temperaments and prevailing moods, not necessarily with different expectations.

We need also to divide hope into two main categories. First, there are temporary hopes, which everyone has. Some are relatively trivial, though they do not always seem so at the time: “I hope I make my train connection”, “I hope the weather is good for our holiday”. Other hopes, e.g. that husband or son comes back safely from the wars, are far from trivial; but they are still temporary.

Then there is broader long-term hope, for the future of the human race. Here anyone who thinks and feels cannot be hopeful about our future: even if we avoid a manmade disaster like nuclear war, dramatic climate change, a natural phenomenon whose effects are aggravated by human greed

and stupidity, seems likely to extinguish us in one or two thousand years.

It is rational not to spend our lives in a state of permanent sadness, overwhelmed by the suffering and stupidity of others. The rational man does what he can and seeks to make the most of life.

This state would be commonly described as *contentment*. Contentment is a much undervalued state of being, wrongly associated perhaps with complacency, a tolerance of the intolerable and an absence of striving for betterment. In the present context, I am arguing that it is easily possible to live without hope in the broader sense. I suspect also that it is very common.

I suspect also that it is more common in the over-65s. This must be partly because there is less to hope for as one gets older. We tend to no longer seek excitement, quick thrills or instant gratifications; if we do not become any less selfish, we do not look for worldly advancement or improved status; whatever level we have reached, that is in the past. Our hopes and fears are partly for ourselves, but mainly for our children and their children. Even these need not destroy our capacity for contentment.

It has been shown again and again that once a person achieves a basic material standard additional income makes absolutely no difference to contentment, let alone happiness. I believe that the majority of people in western Europe could live contentedly without hope. I would follow Epicurus in advocating the pursuit of pleasure, not in the vulgar sense but by the exclusion of things that detract from or obstruct pleasure – and hope can be such an obstruction, for it encourages one to live in a hypothetical future rather than the known present. Living in the future also means living in fear.

Much more vital than hope are the will to live, an openness of heart and mind to appreciate the world, and a determination to make the most of life while we are alive.

Maurice Line, Harrogate U3A



## FEEDBACK

If you would like to tell us what you have especially enjoyed or found useful in this issue, we would be very pleased to hear from you. Comments should be submitted to the SOURCES Editorial Panel, c/o U3A National Office, 19 East Street, Bromley, Kent, BR1 1QH



## NETWORKING

The establishment of the Learning Support Network left lots of people looking politely puzzled. Behind, sometimes in front of their hands, they ask two questions, what is the Network and why do we need one? My recent experience in the West Country may help to answer in part.

Some time after the York Conference I was contacted by the Groups Co-ordinator and the Secretary of a U3A in Somerset, about 130 miles away from me. They were thinking actively about ways to expand and reinvigorate some of their groups. They proposed to hold a Group Leaders Meeting and asked if I would like to attend. I said yes.

There were about 24 members at the meeting, including Chairman, Secretary and other officers, group leaders and substitutes from those groups whose leaders could not be there. It was, as these things always are, lively, interesting and encouraging and we discussed many issues. I contributed one or two observations as an outsider. These were received politely and generally seen as helpful. I drew attention to one or two resources available from the Learning Support organisation and the National Office. They knew of the Resource Centre and about most of the services on offer already, but there were specific items they did not know about. My attendance seemed to be valued.

Before I left I chatted to the Chairman who was running a Creative Writing Group in which the members wanted to develop a self-critical technique which would help them develop their skills without making them feel their work was worthless. I suggested a basic method and, when I got home, I prepared and sent a demonstration analysis and criticism of one of my own stories to show the methodology. I posted this to the Chairman who was delighted to receive it and thought it would be most useful.

Now, one of the tutors of my Short Stories Online course is also the National Creative Writing Network Co-ordinator, Maggie Smith. I emailed her. She too, was pleased to have a copy of the 'Literary Criticism' piece and asked if this particular U3A had contacted her Network. I am putting them in touch and maybe they will attend one of the Study Days to be run by Maggie in the near future.

Meanwhile they are collaborating with several other U3As in their part of Somerset and Devon to set up their own Study Day for developing interest groups.

That is networking.

*Ian Searle, Carrick U3A*

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## THE TRUE SPIRIT OF LEARNING

“U3A honours the true spirit of learning. It makes a valuable contribution to civic society.” These words of praise were uttered not by a U3A member but by Cynthia Welbourn, Director of Education for North Yorkshire County Council. The occasion was the Ridings Open Day held at Askham Bryan College in York on August 5<sup>th</sup> and which was so well organised by Ridings U3As. Cynthia had been invited to give the welcoming address.

More than 700 people drawn mostly from local U3As attended the event which was a fitting showcase as well as a

very happy celebration of the achievements of the Ridings U3As. I was lucky enough to have been invited on behalf of U3A Learning Support to take part in what turned out to be a very sunny and memorable day.

Cynthia Welbourn went on to develop her theme in her address by describing what she saw as the similarity between young children in primary school learning through the “play way” and U3A members in their mode of learning. She said that in our education system, as children get older, we tend to “distort” the experience of learning, especially between the ages of 14 and 28. But she felt that the U3A had found its way back to the true spirit of learning – “Learning for pleasure, learning for its own sake.”

Cynthia's perceptive comments were well amplified by the rich variety of exhibitions and live events which the Ridings U3As had brought together for the day. Singing, dancing, drama – arts and crafts and even Magic and Mah Jong found their way onto the very pretty Askham Bryan campus. The “pleasure principle” of learning was well and truly demonstrated. Congratulations to all concerned and “thank you” from a happy guest.

*Elaine Williams*

*Convenor – U3A Learning Support*

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## A VIRTUAL U3A (VU3A)

A small U3A working party together with some willing volunteers are part way through a pilot scheme to test the feasibility of the concept of a totally on-line U3A - the Virtual U3A. It is intended to serve the needs of people who are in some way isolated, perhaps for reasons of health or geographical isolation.

Our willing volunteers are spread across the globe, as far afield as Australia and New Zealand as well as Tobermory on the isle of Mull.

It is early days yet and we are still learning but we are already confident that it is genuinely possible to establish a friendly and sharing group, solely in cyber-space. We are now exploring together different ways of creating shared learning possibilities online.

It is important to say at this stage that the Virtual U3A, if successful, will be quite distinct from the excellent online courses which are continuing to be so successful. The online courses will continue as an additional resource for existing U3A members and members of the VU3A. The Virtual U3A seeks to establish a separate U3A (or U3As) for those people for whom attendance at a U3A group meeting is more or less impossible. The Virtual U3A will have its own autonomy and eventually run its own affairs just as any other “earthbound” U3A does at present.

We have some way to go and at the moment we are focussing our attention on the mechanics of how groups of people might interact with each other. It is also important for us to try and create a springboard of different models of participative learning to serve as a guide for people who might join in the future. Our willing volunteers are helping in all stages of the evaluation process.

If you are interested in the project or if you know of anyone who might benefit from belonging to a virtual U3A, please contact: Mike Williams – mikandel@tesco.net - or fill in an enquiry form at [db.u3a.org.uk/survey/vu3asurvey.asp](http://db.u3a.org.uk/survey/vu3asurvey.asp)

*VU3A working party*

## SOURCES PAST

The following appeared in Issue No.6, November 1999. Although the topic area in this particular example is 'Crafts', nevertheless the message it contains might give hope and inspiration to many people wondering whether or not they could start up a group in other areas.

"I have no qualification in any crafts, just a love of trying new crafts. I try to be at least one step ahead of my students."



## THE SHARED LEARNING PROJECTS, MOVING ON IN LONDON AND ALL OVER THE COUNTRY

SOURCES in March this year carried an article about how the Museum Projects in London have developed into Shared Learning Projects in London and in other parts of the country. The shape of these Projects, their format and content, are all changing and adapting, though the basic idea remains the same – a team of U3A members from several different local U3As, working as a team with others whom they didn't previously know on a specific project for a limited length of time, with a clear agenda suggested by or agreed with the institution where they are working.

During 2004, the scope of the Projects has widened. In London, in the spring, a team worked with the British Museum evaluating their two recently opened galleries, the elegant "Enlightenment" Gallery in the newly restored King's Library, and the delightful ethnographical "Living and Dying" Gallery. These two provided a real contrast in styles, and the team made suggestions and comments on as many aspects as they could – their report was presented to the Education Officers and curators, who were most impressed with it. It will have reinforced their own decisions and plans; there were very few criticisms, and lots of praise! And the British Museum has asked for another Shared Learning Project in 2005, so our partnership there is, we hope, becoming an annual one.

During the summer, three more teams worked in London, at the Geffrye Museum in Hackney, at the Royal Opera House in Covent Garden, and at the V&A, on the Adult Learners' Website. This edition of Sources contains articles about one or two of these, by members of the teams who took part in them.

Also during the summer, the Sussex U3As have launched an "umbrella" Project entitled "Entertainment in Sussex". Those participating will be working individually or in teams of all sizes, from very small groups to whole U3As, covering a wide range of entertainment. So far the following ideas are already in place: from Brighton, the Races; from Seaford, Glyndebourne; Crawley, children's entertainment; Shoreham, Marlipins Maritime Museum; Patcham, drama; Five Deans, pub entertainment; East Grinstead, handbells; Arun, water sports and events. Other ideas to come include village festivals, the seaside, hang-gliding, and many more. Everything will come together towards the end of spring 2005 with a major exhibition contributed to by the whole of the Region. All this may well provide a template

for a different scheme somewhere else in the country, centred on many different places.

The autumn sees new beginnings in London, at Somerset House and the Museum of Garden History, and there are already people with ideas for Projects from Scotland to Belfast and Cornwall. If you would like to join them, do ring me on 0208 346 3751. I have various notes with suggestions for starting up, some specific ideas for projects, how to get going and so on, which may be helpful.

Jenny Clark



## SHARED LEARNING – U3A and GEFFRYE MUSEUM VICTORIAN GOVERNESSES

In the Spring of this year my attention was drawn to a shared learning project arranged between The Geffrye Museum, Hackney and U3A members to research and produce documentation on The Life of a Victorian Governess. I knew the Geffrye Museum having visited it on several occasions, and I have a particular interest in social history so I decided to make an application for this new venture.

Shirley Thew, our Co-ordinator wrote to the participants on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of April giving us the dates of meetings, roughly fortnightly, starting on Wednesday afternoons from the 12<sup>th</sup> May until the 14<sup>th</sup> July which would end with a verbal presentation of our work to the Museum Staff. She also gave us at that time some ideas for the project e.g. Governesses in Literature; Newspaper and Journal Advertisements for Governesses; their retirement etc.

Our initial meeting was an informal get to know each other lunch at the Museum Restaurant after which we ten U3A members were greeted by Christine Lalumia the Deputy Director and Head of Education and Alison Lightbown Education Officer: Access and Public Programmes at the Geffrye Museum. Our subject matter was to be 'The Lives of Governesses and those who employed them in London from a period between 1855–1875. Our research had to be relative to aims of the Museum which specialises in House Interiors conveying the lives of Upper Middle Class Families.

We were invited to choose from a list arrived at through discussion, and the following were chosen either to be researched individually or with a partner. - Governesses in Literature: Families employing Governesses: Advertisements, and Recruitment of Governesses: The Governesses' social background and A Typical Day In The Life Of A Governess. I had already done some pre-reading and made an initial search on the Web on the subject and I was particularly interested in researching a benevolent institution that had been formed in 1843 providing assistance for Governesses in distress and during their retirement, and it was agreed that this would be suitable.

For the next few weeks I worked really hard at carrying out my research – firstly by attending the Guildhall Library where I found through their computer base a book written solely about the Governesses Benevolent Institution as well as a useful article written in The Camden History Review on *The Care of Aged Governesses in Kentish Town*. From this and from the bibliography of several books including that of Kathryn Hughes 'Victorian Governesses' I was led to the London Metropolitan Archives where I was able to search

through the Minute and Year Books of the Governesses Benevolent Institution from 1843-1966. The search and the reading took up a great deal of my time for the next few weeks and one of the most difficult parts was putting the information together in order to make a good verbal eight minute presentation – what could I leave out?

After a rehearsal a week before the project ended our final presentation was made to Staff from the Geffrye Museum and to members of the National Executive and was said to be successful so far as the Museum was concerned for future use in their education programmes. For us taking part there is still work to do. We are expected to write up our work in some detail, to be completed by the end of August.

Would I get involved in another project of Shared Learning – definitely I would though I think we did need a little more time. This was a wonderful learning experience not only about the life of the Governess in Victorian Times but learning how to go about finding the information that is needed and in meeting with very helpful and kindly persons who led us through the Institutions which most of us were unused to. The Geffrye Museum Staff were very welcoming and made us feel that what we were doing was very worthwhile. Our presentation was in itself a learning project – how to get information across with the aid of an overhead projector in 8 minutes. I can only speak for this particular project but if they are organised as well and as efficiently as this one has been it is a very useful and interesting extension of our U3A learning experience.

*Marian Allen, Basildon and Billericay U3A.*



## ROYAL OPERA HOUSE SHARED LEARNING PROJECT

Many cities seem magically transformed when viewed from across their rooftops. And that was the view of London enjoyed by eleven U3A members who worked on the Royal Opera House Shared Learning Project. Opera lovers are already familiar with the transformation of the public spaces at the Opera House in recent years. But few have probably experienced the lovely spaces that have been created for those who work behind the scenes at the House.

The Royal Opera House Shared Learning Project had a relatively long gestation period. But as with any good production – timing is all. The project really came into being when it was realised that the Royal Opera House Archives were genuinely in need of help. The Archives were established in 1969 with the aim of recording the history of the Royal Opera since its beginning as the Theatre Royal in 1732. A decision has been taken that this very valuable archive should now be made available to a wider public and in the next few years much of the material will be digitised so that it can be accessed online.

We were pleased that Francesca Franchi, the Royal Opera archivist for 25 years, invited U3A to work on some specific tasks for the Archive. Five members of the group were busy with a collection of black and white negatives from a photographic collection which Donald Southern had built up over more than thirty years. The Archive had recently acquired the collection and the photos needed to be catalogued and re-housed. Wearing white gloves and

bending over light boxes the group began the process of identifying sets of photos, marking up a catalogue sheet and then re-housing them in new, clear plastic strips. The group was greatly helped by Francesca's extensive knowledge of Opera and Ballet productions.

Another member of the group worked on a questionnaire which was intended to find out what potential users might want to gain from the digitised archive. This task was undertaken with assistance from Gary Brown, the Box Office duty manager. The first part of the process involved preliminary contact with potential users. This involved about fifty phone calls to people in colleges and schools and professional and amateur opera groups. A single page questionnaire was then devised and sent out to more than ninety potential users. It is pleasing to see that there was a 53% return rate within two weeks. The responses were then analysed and provided some unexpected information. Potential users were asked which aspects of the Archive they would most like to access and it is interesting to note that recordings, scores and libretti ranked very highly in the responses.

Five other U3A members worked on "The Opera House in Other Collections" and began some research to discover which other centres in the world hold artefacts relating to the Royal Opera House. It was decided to start with recordings held by the British Library Sound Archive. This involved searching online and collecting all the references and the work was carried out both at the British Library and at home. The number of references proved to be much greater than anyone expected and the results are still being collated and databased. One member of the group researched references to the Royal Ballet in Russian publications and archives.

The group worked tirelessly over a period of ten weeks. We needed to muster all our concentration skills and be as meticulous as possible. Some of the work will carry on ..... So many more photos to identify ..... so many recordings still to collate. We owe a special thank you to Gary who, in addition to assisting with the questionnaire, also acted as our link with Paul Reeve in the very busy education department and Francesca in the archive. His boundless energy and unfailing cheerfulness made a great difference to our visits. Gary is in the final stages of an M.A. in Arts Policy and Management and was also able to incorporate some of his experiences with our group in his final thesis. At the end of the project and after much painstaking work we were rewarded with an invitation to the schools matinee of *Peter Grimes*. What an unforgettable experience. A wonderful production and one of the most enthusiastic audiences I have ever heard. Thank you to the Royal Opera House and to the U3A for enabling us to have this experience.

*Project Co-ordinator,  
Royal Opera House Shared Learning Project*



## ONLINE COURSES

SOURCES would like to draw the attention of readers to the regular information about UK U3A Online Courses appearing on the back page and, in particular, to the fact that there has been an increase in the fees.

The Online Courses have been backed by the Phoenix fund over the past three years, since they were first started. Those responsible for administering the courses have always produced excellent value for money, most of it being spent on the technical support needed to make the courses suitable for uploading in a house style of our own, as well as the support also needed for establishing the necessary pages on the web for each course, and keeping email lists, enrolling and registering subscribers, recruiting authors and so on. Some dozen or so courses have been produced.

The only income for the immediate future will come from enrolment fees which will suffice to re-run existing courses, but may not be enough to produce too many new ones.

U3A Online Courses have been specially written by experienced U3A members for individuals or groups. Each Sunday during the nine-week course, a new Unit is viewable on your computer screen via the Internet. There are activities which the participants are asked to complete, usually in the form of written submissions. Most courses require participants to use the resources of the Internet to complete their work and links may be provided. All authors and tutors for these courses are unpaid volunteers.

*Editor*



## ART HISTORY: FOLLOWING AN ONLINE COURSE WITH A GROUP

Last year, in the Stockton-on-Tees U3A Art Appreciation class, we decided to follow the online Italian Art course written by Audrey Loraine. The course covers the development of painting and sculpture, mainly in northern Italy, between approximately 1400 and 1600. It consists of an introductory unit, followed by eight units. The response to the course was very enthusiastic and the class members found it enjoyable and interesting. I had previously taken the course as a tutored student; this meant I knew what was involved. While it is helpful if someone in the group has already taken the course, it is not essential. The members of our class enjoyed doing the work and discussing what they had found out. In much of Art History there are no right or wrong opinions. Model guideline answers are available from Audrey Loraine, if they are required. The course was available for downloading at a total cost of £5 for a group. We sent a payment of £5 and we were given a password to access the course as the units became available online. Each member of the class was given the password, on the strict understanding that the password was only for use by members of the class.

When our class discussed following the online course we worked out the practicalities amongst ourselves. We have about 18 members in the class. Roughly half of them have a computer and internet access. Each person who has a

computer arranged to download and print out a copy for their own use and one extra for a specific person in the class. That way everyone knew who was providing a copy for whom. Each person who has no computer agreed on an amount to pay per sheet to their partner who was providing the printouts. This amount varied according to the kind of printers used and whether the colour version or the printer-friendly version was printed. Some people agreed on around 9p a sheet while others agreed on around 5p a sheet. It all seemed quite amicable and the system worked well. It was also possible for class members to download in public libraries, but printing there is quite expensive.

I advised the computer owners to download and save each unit as it became available; the units were made available at weekly intervals on a Sunday over a period of nine weeks and were left on the site for a few more weeks to the timetable. It is important to save and keep all the units until the class has finished the whole course. Some class members still have the course stored, as they enjoy looking back over it. We used the course from September to March, as we had planned, but it would have been better to spend a full U3A year on it, up to June. It was sometimes a little rushed. Our Art Appreciation class meets every two weeks, but there are often interruptions to the timetable. Each time we met, those who were printing gave a copy of the next unit to their partners, so that everyone had a couple of weeks to do the homework. The class members brought in various relevant books and a few people downloaded and printed out some of the images.

We borrowed the set of slides produced by Audrey Loraine for this course. The slides are excellent and I can recommend them. The drawback for us is that we have no central equipment store. I had to fetch the projector from someone's house, take it home and load it, a second person brought an extension cable from home while a third person brought a projector stand from home. All this equipment was taken by cars to the meeting venue. As some of the units had only a few images, I quickly gave up and we passed pictures round the class. However, half-way through the course and again at the end, I used the slides as an excellent revision of what we had covered. During the course, after unit 2, we borrowed two very good videos from the Resource Centre (The titles are: "Walls of Colour" for fresco and "Italian Painting before 1400" for tempera).

Everyone in the class found this course to be a very good introduction to the subject and appreciated the fact that it is well-structured, interesting and thought-provoking. We enjoyed it so much that we are now considering taking another online Art History course.

\* The titles are: "Walls of Colour" for fresco and "Italian Painting before 1400" for tempera.

*Lucienne Grant, Stockton-on-Tees U3A*





Johnston, Edward (1906). *Writing & Illuminating, & Lettering*. Pitman Publishing Ltd. Reprinted in 1994 by A & C Black, London.

Johnston, Edward (Victoria and Albert Museum) (1966). *The House of David: A Book of Sample Scripts, 1914 A.D.* HMSO, London.

Orling, Annie (1995). *Calligraphy Stroke by Stroke*. Headline Book Publishing, London.

Wilson, Diana Hardy (2002). *The Encyclopedia of Calligraphy Techniques*. Search Press Ltd., Tunbridge Wells.

Note: The above may be out of print or there may be later editions.

Ivan Rappaport, U3A in London



## LARGEST PRIME NUMBER DISCOVERED

A distinctly invaluable piece of information is revealed in a news item from the BBC's News Online Science Editor:

*A scientist has used his computer to find the largest prime number found so far - written out, it would stretch for 25 kilometres. Primes are important to encryption and could lead to uncrackable codes. The new figure, identified by Josh Findley, contains 7,235,733 digits, and would take someone the best part of six weeks to write out longhand.*



## WEBSITES

Recommendations from readers on useful websites. Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information. Apologies for any errors that may have crept in. **NEW CONTRIBUTIONS ALWAYS WELCOME** Please share your interesting discoveries with the rest of us!

### WALKING & RAMBLING

#### **www.ramblers.org.uk**

The official website of The Ramblers' Association, Britain's biggest organisation working for walkers

There is also a Long Distance Walkers Association at

#### **www.ldwa.org.uk**

**www.walkingbritain.co.uk** is dedicated to footpaths

**www.whi.org.uk** is a Walking for Health Initiative

**www.walking-routes.co.uk** of provides hundreds of links to UK web pages with details thousands of walking routes

**www.go4awalk.com** provides masses of information about walking in Britain's countryside

### OTHER

**www.greenwichmeantime.com** Get the correct time - everywhere

#### **www.ingenious.org.uk**

This site brings together images and viewpoints to create insights into SCIENCE and CULTURE

**vimp.museophile.com** for a directory of online museums

**web.uvic.ca/hcmc/clipart** An interesting collection of clipart for language teachers (or for anyone, come to that)

**www.openwriting.com** features a feast of words from regular columnists, U3A writers and other authors

See the ITCH website at **www.itcanhelp.org.uk**

ITCanHelp is a national network of volunteers who help people with disabilities with any computer problems. We recognise that computers can be particularly important to disabled people in helping them communicate and lead a full life. At the same time it may be difficult for them to obtain support, not least because of the specialist software and hardware they may be using and because of the high cost professional support. Volunteers attempt to solve the problems in the user's own home and the service is completely free. Go to the website and you should be able to find contact details for volunteers in your local area.

SOURCES is indebted to U3A Signposts for some of the above websites. Find out more about Signposts at **worldu3a.org/signpost**



## A RATHER SPECIAL WEBSITE

Ralph Blumenau, a new 'recruit' to SOURCES, has informed us of a most interesting-looking website at **www.aldaily.com** and here is his brief summary of its contents:

The AL stands for 'Arts and Letters'. Every weekday this website prints articles of interest from English-language sources all over the world. It is arranged in three columns: Articles of Note, New Books, and Essays and Opinions. Each has that day's entry at the top of the column, followed by a long line of items that appeared on earlier days. There is also a column of links to lots of newspapers and periodicals.



### SOURCES PUBLICATION DATES

Sources currently appears three times a year, with publication dates in November, March and June.

A subscription to **SOURCES** is free of charge. Please contact your local Committee or the National Office for an official subscription form.



## AWARDS FOR ALL

We are devoting a corner of this issue to Awards For All, a subject with which quite probably a majority of readers are familiar but which is nevertheless of sufficient interest to warrant the attention.

[We begin with some wording taken from the Awards For All website – [www.awardsforall.org.uk](http://www.awardsforall.org.uk)]

### Welcome to Awards for All in England

What is Awards for All?

**Awards for All** is a Lottery grants scheme aimed at local communities. We award grants of between £500 and £5,000 in a simple and straightforward way.

How can we help your organisation and community? We can fund projects that enable people to take part in art, sport, heritage and community activities, as well as projects that promote education, the environment and health in the local community.

You can apply at any time

- The application form is short and simple
- There are links to guidance notes and sources of help
- You will be told if you are successful or not within 8 weeks

If you are planning a project and you need between £500 and £5,000 then **Awards for All** may be able to help you. Sometimes quite small sums of money can have a big impact. We hope these awards will make a real difference to communities.

### [Information is always available from somewhere within our organization.]

Len Street has provided some helpful notes on the national website. Click on Grants From Awards For all on the home page or visit [http://www.u3a.org.uk/computing/awards\\_forall.htm](http://www.u3a.org.uk/computing/awards_forall.htm)

The U3A National Office will always advise further and, indeed, details are sent out from time to time to all U3As in the business mailings. Many U3As have benefited from a grant from Awards For All and another approach might be to ask around your neighbouring U3As or within your regional grouping for advice and guidance.

[Finally, the article below is a good example of how a U3A used the existence of Awards For All to benefit its members.]



### FROM LITTLE ACORNS

About eighteen months ago, I was privileged to be asked to act as Convenor of the Wellington and District U3A's newly formed computer users group. At that time it consisted of about seven or eight souls who owned a computer but used it with more enthusiasm than knowledge and the object from the outset was to share common problems – of which there were many! – and, in discussion, hope to solve them.

In this it has been successful and the success itself brought new problems in that the creation of this group sparked interest among other members of the U3A. There was an established need not only for larger premises to accommodate this expanded group which has now reached 22, but also to cater for the needs of those who had not yet taken the plunge and purchased a machine and those who had a computer and needed support in its use.

At the same time the need for a projector was identified, mainly for the ever-growing 'Enjoying Architecture' Group, whose membership had outstripped its small meeting place and is now around 50-60, but also to facilitate the presentation of programmes by other Groups within the U3A. In addition, it was felt that the U3A as a whole could benefit as membership over the last year had soared to about 120 and computer-aided projection facilities at the monthly Coffee Mornings would tend to make these events much more user-friendly and informative.

As a result, an application to 'Awards for All' for Lottery Funding to purchase a computer and projector was successful and I was asked to oversee this. A combination of intense research, some shrewd negotiations and a downward spiral in prices, meant that we were able to get, not only these items, but also a laptop (second hand), a multifunction printer and a combined VCR/DVD player, together with some tutorial software and consumables, all within the limits of the Lottery Award.

Thus, we are now in a position to provide hands-on help to new computer users, support the more experienced and provide a learning environment which is enjoyable for all. The laptop/projector equipment has already proved to be a boon to other groups within the U3A and we would urge other U3As who have a similar need to make application for funds. The South-West Regional Office of 'Awards for All' could not have been more helpful and applications from local groups whose membership and activities could benefit from a pump-priming injection of Lottery funds will be welcomed. Our U3A has benefited from this and the award has sparked off an increased interest by the community in all our activities. No doubt other U3As in the country would find the same.

*Sandy Elder  
Wellington & District U3A*



## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

### SCIENCE

U3A Explores Science at the R.I.  
11<sup>th</sup> April 2005  
[Details in a future Business Mailing]

### SUMMER SCHOOLS 2005

28<sup>th</sup> June – 1 July & 19<sup>th</sup> July – 22<sup>nd</sup> July

### MUSIC

U3A Jazz Appreciation Network Study Day  
Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2005 - Sheffield  
Contact Bob Jones 0118 9413889

## UK U3A ONLINE COURSES 2005

Full details and application forms can be found on the National U3A Web site at [www.u3a.org.uk/~courses/online](http://www.u3a.org.uk/~courses/online)

### TUTORED COURSES [Fee £15 per course]

These have 8 Units issued weekly in which participants need to work at least 5 hours each week, in collaboration with each other and the tutor.

From 9 Jan	GARDEN HISTORY GREAT NORTHERN EUROPEAN ARTISTS [New]
From 16 Jan	CREATIVE WRITING – SHORT STORIES DIGITAL IMAGING
From 23 Jan	DESIGN IN YOUR LIFE WRITING FOR PUBLICATION

### UNTUTORED COURSES for Individuals or for Group Leaders [Fee £7.50 per course]

The courses are written for tutoring, so include questions to students which require interaction and response. They are available for downloading only in their original form.

New courses can be downloaded as they are being issued at weekly intervals. The others above are available at any time as well as the following:

CREATIVE WRITING - FICTION  
CREATIVE WRITING - POETRY  
CREATIVE WRITING - SHORT STORIES  
WRITING TO GOOD EFFECT  
WRITING FOR PUBLICATION

DESIGN IN YOUR LIFE  
ITALIAN ART 1400-1600  
VENICE AND HER ARTISTS  
VISITING ARTISTS IN ROME  
ARTISTS OF SPAIN

*The Third Age Trust holds the copyright of all the above courses; they must not be circulated without permission.*

UNDERSTANDING COMPUTERS [this has a tutor for discussion only]  
ENGLISH – LANGUAGE OF THE WORLD  
*This is our very first PowerPoint course*

### COURSE FRAMEWORKS [Free]

These are topics suitable for group study but in note form only. Suggestions are given on how to search the web to fill out the details.

GENETICS  
LIGHTHOUSES

### LINKS TO OTHER Free COURSE MATERIAL

WARTIME REMINISCENCES  
MIEVEVAL TIMBER-FRAMED HOUSES  
VICTORIAN ART

## AUSTRALIAN ONLINE COURSES

Five places are reserved on each Australian course for UK members of the U3A. The list is currently being updated, so check on the website for availability and apply as above.

Published by the Third Age Trust



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