

Issue no 1 3rd August 2009

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1. From Kathleen Mercier, Chairman North West Regional Executive Committee (NWREC)

At the end of the meeting in Preston on the 29th April I asked those present to go back to their U3As and discuss what had taken place at that meeting and to report back to NWREC with thoughts on what their U3A would like us to achieve. We have had little response and thus I am making another appeal to individual U3As and Networks to tell us please what is most important to you as members of the North West Region. The Committee are very enthusiastic and want to work for the benefit of all members in the North West.

Do make us aware of what you expect from us in the next twelve months along with any problems or criticisms of the movement that you would like airing.

I hope that we will plan a programme that members find stimulating and that we represent your views fairly to The Third Age Trust.

Comments to kathleenmercier@talktalk.net and/or j.ellison521@btinternet.com

2. Report of our first two NWREC meetings

2.1 Planned Events by NWREC

Several events are planned by NWREC. Where dates are known details are given in section 3, for less well defined events current thinking is given here.

Day visit to Jodrell Bank Observatory of Manchester University on **25th Sept 09** (details below and an application form in appendix 1).

Day visit 'Culture at Liverpool' on **16th March 2010** with a wide program of parallel activities (details as currently envisaged below).

The idea of making the **AGM** in spring 2010 a part of a day activity based on a talk by a **distinguished speaker** is favoured. In this case we would probably need a theatre setting which should have easy access by car or train and a minimum capacity of about 300. Possibilities mentioned were Duke's Lancaster (good rail, adequate parking at acceptable cost, bit far north), UCLAN, Preston (parking not easy but close to Preston rail station), Friends Meeting House in Manchester, or Manchester University. Any other suggestions for venues would be welcome as would suggestions for speakers who would not cost a vast amount of money.

Other events will be announced in the future.

We plan to organise Shared Learning Projects and Mary-Ann Renton will coordinate.

Discussion Days and similar activities for example those designed for group leaders/coordinators will, at least for the present, be left to the Networks or individual U3A's although we shall advertise them fully in NW U3A NEWS. However we already know about several and these are advertised in the diary below and, where appropriate, application forms are in the appendix.

2.2 Communications

It was agreed that John Ellison would edit a **Newsletter** which would be **available to any member of a NW U3A** who wished to have it but it would be essentially text only and **only** available electronically both for cost and more importantly time considerations. It would have

- a) diary of forthcoming events,
- b) reports and news for NW Region,
- c) NWREC reports
- d) editorial and probably letters to the editor.

It should come out when a reasonable amount of information is available. **Material for inclusion from any U3A or Network in the region is welcome and should be sent to John Ellison by email johnellison521@googlemail.com at any time.** This email address is exclusively for the NW U3A Newsletter. Other emails to j.ellison521@btinternet.com please.

We wish to have a **Website** which would be open without any confidential information and should include

- a) colour photographs and reports,
- b) NW Regional information,
- c) network information,
- d) individual U3A information of wider interest, and
- e) editorial.

Is there anyone out there with the expertise to help us set this up? Please volunteer!

2.3 Brief Report from the NEC

Alec McMinn reported on the latest information from TAT. In particular he emphasised the importance of the White Paper on Informal Learning. This was highly relevant to U3As but we have to beware of other organisations trying to push us into the background particularly as regard resources. In principal we ought to be able to get access to free/subsidised rooms and IT facilities as well as less tangible help. University, Adult Colleges, Local Authority and Health Authority contacts are also very relevant. He also discussed the extent to which we are a community resource and the value of intergenerational work involving (for example U3A people giving help with reading in primary schools). A scheme exists in parts of the North West called Volunteer Reading Help. For further information on this contact kathleenmercier@talktalk.net

Members of the NW Region of U3A's may be interested to know that the details and conditions attached to funding from TAT are a matter of difficult and ongoing discussion with the National Treasurer. NWREC hope eventually to achieve a satisfactory outcome for the NW. (Editors Note. Those of us who have been involved most closely with the discussions feel that the current TAT Officers are not tuned into the needs of real U3As. We have good support from widely scattered Regional Trustees.)

3. Diary of Events (*Not exclusively those organised by NWREC*) with contacts.

Please publicise ALL the following events as widely and as soon as possible in your U3A so your members can book early and/or put them in their diaries.

A) A trip to **Jodrell Bank on 25th Sept 2009** with a talk by Prof Ian Morrison from Jodrell. This will last from 10.30 to about 16.00 but our special activities will concentrate near the middle of the day. It will involve a guided tour around the laboratory and the telescopes, free access to the visitor centre, a tour of the arboretum, a short film show, and lunch in addition to Ian's talk. **Please apply using the attached form asap** as numbers are limited. If demand is high we may be able to arrange a second trip so if this date is unsuitable for you but you would like to go some other time please let John Ellison know. It is up to individuals to get to Jodrell Bank.

B) **Lancashire Sinfonietta** are giving public concerts in Lancaster and Preston on 24/25th October at 19.30. In association with this **U3A Lancashire Link** have organised a session by the Sinfonietta's Principal Oboe Rachael Clegg, who will give a Recital and Talk related to the concert on **Wednesday 21st Oct at St Cuthbert's Church Centre, Lytham Road, Fulwood, Preston at 14.00**. The actual concerts feature in addition to the Lancashire Sinfonietta, the Manchester Chamber Choir, Elizabeth Weisberg – Soprano, Jean Rigby – Alto, Thomas Hobbs – Tenor, Philip Tebb – Bass under the direction of Andrew Watkinson. The program (for both concerts) is **Handel - Dixit Dominus, Haydn - London Symphony and Haydn - Nelson Mass**. Both composers are celebrating an anniversary this year. Some of the UK's most exciting voices join the Sinfonietta for this Haydn/Handel tribute. The Sinfonietta welcomes the Manchester Chamber Choir to join them in the Dixit Dominus and the Nelson Mass. Internationally acclaimed Director, Andrew Watkinson, will command the proceedings from the violin in what promises to be one of the most memorable concerts of the year. The concert charges are £10 Adult, £5 Concessions. The phone number for the Sinfonietta is 01257 516444. It is up to individual U3A members to book for the actual concerts.

Please complete the application form at the end of this newsletter or send an email to j.ellison521@btinternet.com giving your full particulars including your phone number. The cost for the meeting will be £2 per person payable at the door and will include tea/coffee and biscuits at the interval. We shall finish by 16.00. Booking is necessary in order to reserve a place and enable us to plan details.

C) **Penrith Study Days**. Four enthusiasts in **Penrith and North Lakes U3A** lead two study days on the **period 1900-1914** on **Fri 30th Oct 2009 and Fri 29th Jan 2010**, 10.30am to 4.15pm, cost around £5.00 a day (includes coffee/tea, but not lunch). Britain is the main focus and social and political history will feature along with literature, music, art and architecture. Members of other U3As are warmly invited, come to one or both. For further details, please send a stamped and self-addressed envelope (for A5 size pamphlet please) to Robin Acland, Chapelside, Mungrisdale, Penrith CA11 0XR. He will then send full particulars in early September, including how to sign on. For particular queries before that, do contact him at racland@enterprise.net or on 017687 79672.

D) **The Philosopher / Novelist** - a philosophy/literature short course at **Clitheroe U3A** Mondays **Nov. 2: 9: 16: 23: 30: Dec 7** 10am-12noon Clitheroe Library. We shall explore the relationship between the philosophy and the fiction of philosophers who are also novelists, and shall focus on the work of Iris Murdoch and Jean-Paul Sartre. We shall use a mixture of presentation and discussion. Beginners in philosophy will be welcome. Visitors from other U3As are most welcome at a fee of £6 (£1 per session) to cover the cost of the venue. (Cheques payable to 'U3A Clitheroe') Contact Meg Shaw tel: 01200 426103 email: margretshaw@fsmail.net. Further details including a preparatory

reading list will be sent. Please don't delay as numbers are limited – and you need time to read!

E) **Group Leaders Study Day** organised by U3A Lancashire LINK at Lancaster Friends Meeting House - next to Rail Station on **4th November 2009** from 10.30 to 16.00. Contact John Ellison j.ellison521@btinternet.com – cost approx £12 including lunch and refreshments. There will be plenty of time to have parallel sessions on related subject areas in separate rooms as well as some demonstrations, suggestion and hints on the use of modern audio/visual techniques. Final details to follow but if you would like to attend (not restricted to Lancashire U3A's) it would help if you let me know asap giving your interests. I can then do more detailed planning.

F) **Culture at Liverpool – 16th March 2010.** This will have many options.

- a) A tour by Blue Badge Guides of the Art Deco Philharmonic Hall followed by refreshments with staff available to answer questions and finally viewing a rehearsal of the orchestra.
- b) Guided tour of the Walker Art Gallery by Dr Paul O'Keefe a lively and knowledgeable presenter. Refreshments are available at the cafe in the gallery.
- c) A tour of St Georges Hall led by Steve Binns MBE, Liverpool Community Historian, who will give a short lecture afterwards on a topic of general interest to visitors to Liverpool.
- d) An Art Collection Tour of the TATE. Also another tour based on the TATE entitled The Building and Our History. Refreshments are available here ranging from coffee and cake to full meals.
- e) The Maritime Museum with educational experiences entitled- The Sailors Tale and Victorian Public Health. There is a cafe in the museum for refreshments
- f) The Slavery Museum (in the same building as the Maritime Museum) Here there will be an opportunity to watch a drama entitled Destination Freedom followed by a discussion on the issues raised. There will also be a presentation on the Transatlantic Slave Trade which charts the evolution of the Slave Trade from its African roots.
- g) Slave Tour – This is a guided walk led by an Afro Carribean Scouser!
- h) Science Walk covering buildings associated with scientific discoveries.

G) **Residential Summer School on 5th to 7th July 2010** at Newton Rigg (part of University of Cumbria) near Penrith based on Lake District related matters. Eg Geology, Architecture, Lake Poets, Photography & Art for 5-7 July 2010. We already have offers for the following Subjects, Ruskin by Meg Shaw, Lakeland Artists by Philip Hutton, Lakeland Poets by Mary McGreggor, Geology by Chris Arkwright. **If you would be willing to offer History, Photography, Natural Science or other topics related to the Lake District please get in touch with Kathleen Mercier on 0151 652 0808 or e mail kathleenmercier@talktalk.net**

John Ellison
03.08.09

PTO to APPENDIX 1 & 2

APPENDIX 1

NW REGION U3A

VISIT TO JODRELL BANK OBSERVATORY

(Jodrell Bank Centre for Astrophysics at The University of Manchester)

on 25 Sept 2009 10.30 till 16.00 including lunch at around 12.00.

Application Form

NAME

ADDRESS

POST CODE

EMAIL ADDRESS

PHONE NUMBER

There are several lunch packages and costs vary between them. Catering is done for our group so we must have exact choices on your form. All packages include free parking, the talk and tours organised for us by Prof Ian Morrison, free access to the visitor centre, free access to the arboretum, a short film presentation on 'Our Sun, What a Star!' in the 3D theatre. Arrival 10.30 or thereabouts. Visitor centre closes 16.30

Please RING the options you select

A) total cost £13.50. Soup, sandwich, tea/coffee

B1) total cost £15.00. Vegetarian Lasagne with garlic bread, Chocolate fudge cake, and Tea/Coffee.

B2) total cost £15,00. Vegetarian Lasagne with garlic bread, Strawberry cheese cake and Tea/Coffee

C1) total cost £15.00 Chicken Supreme with mushroom sauce, new potatoes & vegetables, Chocolate fudge cake, and Tea/Coffee

C2) total cost £15.00 Chicken Supreme with mushroom sauce, new potatoes & vegetables, Strawberry cheesecake, and Tea/Coffee

It will probably be possible to arrange a free guided walk round the arboretum if you wish to participate please RING this paragraph.

I enclose a cheque for the appropriate amount payable to **NW Region of U3A's**. Please return this form asap to **John Ellison, 4 Crag Bank Crescent, CARNFORTH, LA5 9EQ**. Please apply as soon as possible and please send a separate form for each participant. Numbers are very limited to avoid overcrowding.

If you are interested in attending but cannot make this date please contact John Ellison by email at j.ellison521@btinternet.com or if this is not possible by phone 01524 733400 in the evening.

APPENDIX 2

U3A LANCASHIRE LINK

*Recital and Talk by **Rachael Clegg** from the **Lancashire Sinfonietta** at **14.00 on 21st October** at **St Cuthberts Church Centre, Lytham Road, Fulwood, Preston PR2 3AR** in connection with their public concerts on 24/25 October at Lancaster / Preston respectively*

Application Form

I/We wish to attend the above half day event. I understand that it will cost £2 per person payable at the door (which will include tea/coffee and biscuits). Booking for the concerts themselves is to be done direct not through Lancashire Link U3A.

NAME(s)

ADDRESS

POST CODE

EMAIL ADDRESS

PHONE NUMBER

Please give an email address if possible.

If at all possible please send in your application by email; evening phone messages also acceptable if email not possible. (Postage costs are now too great for postal correspondence to be used except in exceptional circumstances.)