



Yorkshire and The Humber Regional Newsletter

August 2010.

Your Committee : Chairman – Derrick Franks, Vice Chairman - David Wright, Secretary - Christine Ball, Regional Trustee - Anne Firth, Treasurer – position not filled at present.
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Welcome to the first edition of the Newsletter of the Yorkshire and The Humber Region U3As.
This newsletter contains many interesting and inspiring news items from various U3As around our Region. Further news, articles and features from all the Region's U3As would be most welcome for future editions – contact details above.

Anne Firth. Regional Trustee for Yorkshire and The Humber.

I wish to convey my thanks to all who have contributed to this newsletter and hope that all our readers can find something of interest in the contents. I would also like to express my thanks to the National Executive Committee of the Third Age Trust for undertaking the role of publisher and distributor.

Derrick Franks. Chairman Yorkshire and the Humber Regional Committee.

Education and Development Contacts (EDCs)

The Regional Development Team is looking for Education and Development Contacts (EDCs)

This is an Opportunity to work as part of a team setting up, encouraging and supporting U3As within the Region. our Regional Trustee, Anne Firth, will be happy to discuss what is involved and can be contacted by telephone – 01302 722465, or emailed at firthafirth@aol.com

Meeting 13th October: Speaker Dr Alex McMinn JP MBE.

Alex is the Chairman of the U3A National Research Committee and the founding Chairman of the Aughton-Ormskirk U3A – a large proactive and innovative group which in 2008 won the Queen's Award for Community Service.

Prior to retirement he worked in the field of international health for The World Health Organisation and international agencies and governments in over 40 countries.

The Title of the Lecture :

“Active Ageing – the role of the local U3A in sustaining wellbeing”

Quote

“ I am looking forward to my visit to your regional meeting on the above date. I intend to discuss factors that will enhance “Wellbeing” in older people and how U3A activities contribute to the process. I will illustrate this with reference to some of the innovations we have been able to develop in my own U3A”. (Message from Alex to Anne Firth.)

Leeds U3A

U3A Leeds is celebrating its 25th Anniversary and began the year with a special meeting opened by the Queen's personal representative in the county, the Lord Lieutenant of West Yorkshire Dr Ingrid Roscoe. The meeting featured a performance on authentic instruments by the Leeds Waits, who are the official town musicians. They were re-established in 1983 by Alan Radford who is a member of Cookridge and Horsforth U3A. Their website is <http://www.btinternet.com/~alan.radford/waits.htm>

A celebratory tea party was held in April and was attended by a number of founder members. One of those members, Heinz Skyte, celebrated his 90th birthday earlier this year. He and his late wife, Thea, were very active in the local community and in establishing, with much encouragement from Frank Pedley, the U3A in Leeds. Thea ran the local History Group and carried out much of the research on Clarendon Road and Woodhouse recorded by the U3A. Copies of this research are held in the Local History Library and Leeds City Archives. Heinz's experiences, in Germany and England, at the time of the war are recorded on <http://www.myorkshire.org/jpage.asp?jpageid=110&journeyid=61>

The leader of our Literature Group, Peter Gilbert, has had an article explaining the Yorkshire connection to Shakespeare's King Lear published in the August edition of the Yorkshire Ridings magazine. He is currently directing a production of the play with the Hope Theatre Group, to be performed 1- 4th September. See <http://hopetheatregroup.webs.com>

We have a new Chairman, Carol Wigley, to replace Laura Lambe. Laura stood down earlier this year after a demanding but very successful 6 years on the committee, the last three as its Chairman. Under her leadership the number of interest groups and membership of U3A Leeds expanded considerably. Carol has a wide experience in involvement and leadership and hopes to build on Laura's excellent record.

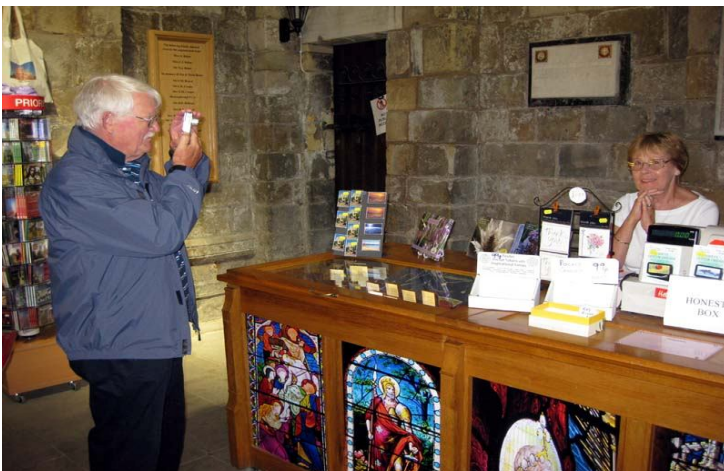
CAMERA CREW IN TOWN



A photo shoot took place in Selby recently when the market town was chosen as the latest venue by the Digital Photography Group of Howden & District U3A. Each month the Group goes 'on location' to selected sites throughout the area to capture images for their portfolios. The places visited include Skidby Mill, Bishop Burton, Eastington Ponds and The Ashes and Market Place in Howden. The Group meets again at the Adult Education

Centre in Howden, two weeks after each site visit to critically analyse their artistic efforts under the expert guidance of an experienced photographer. In a recent display of their work, the Market Place in Howden was one of several pictures on view giving people an opportunity to see for themselves part of the wide range of photographs taken by the Group since their formation some 18 months ago.

Members of the Group are pictured around the Market Cross in Selby Market Place before embarking on the search for that elusive unique image. The Group Leader, Roger Watkins, is standing on the extreme right. Roger is the Chairman of Howden & District U3A, but is due to hand over that role later this year to Jackie Guthrie, seen seated in the centre of the picture. The Group spent some time taking photographs inside Selby Abbey, although the lady behind the desk appears to be praying that Roger will not prolong the taking of her picture.



The Digital Photography Group is one of fifteen or so interest groups within the Howden & District branch of the U3A. Other groups include music & art appreciation, crafts, scrabble, computing, history, bridge, gardening & horticulture, creative writing, relaxation and family history. A nice balance is achieved between a learning and a social event by the majority of

these smaller groups meeting in the homes of the members involved.

A larger gathering of members is held on the last Thursday of each month at Howden Methodist Church Hall when guest speakers are invited to come along and give talks on a wide range of topics.

The programme so far this year has included talks ranging from *'Consumer Rights'* to *'The Part Played by Hull Trawlers in World War I'*. Amongst others programmed for later in the year, Sue Hickson will present a talk on *'Being a Pilot Launch Coxswain'*. Following the AGM to be held in October, the Vice Chairman of The Third Age Trust, Barbara Lewis, will present a talk entitled *'U3A and The Learning Revolution'*.



Since its formation in November 2008, Howden & District U3A has attracted a membership of over 140. The branch is looking to build on this success with an influx of new members from all parts of the district. A number of articles have recently been published in the local press which have raised awareness of the activities of the U3A in Howden. The Membership Secretary Pam Buckton, shown in picture, has reported a substantial increase in the traffic on the website and it is hoped that the target figure of 200 members will be reached by the end of the year. Further information may be obtained by contacting Pam on 01405 839777 or by visiting www.u3asites.org.uk/howden. Brian Curtis Howden & District U3A. 07.08.10

The Fall and Rise of the Railways

An enthralling presentation by the guest speaker at last Thursday's meeting of Howden & District U3A captivated a large audience of members and visitors. David Walford is the Sub-regional Rail Development Officer with Rail Development Humber whose role is to encourage further growth and investment in the rail infrastructure across the region. His talk contained a fascinating account of the development of the railways in our region from the early beginnings in the 19th century up to the present day and concluded with an outline of what the future may hold.

Howden station saw the arrival of its first customers in 1840 when the Hull and Selby Railway opened connecting Hull with the Leeds and Selby Railway. By the end of the 1860s, the ports of Goole and Hull had their own railway networks. The Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway catered for the collieries between Leeds and Barnsley delivering coal to Goole. The Hull and Barnsley Railway opened in 1885 providing a link from the Barnsley coalfields into Hull.

The golden age of rail travel continued up to the war years with goods and first class travel being the key to this success. The years between the two world wars saw the start of the decline as traditional freight was lost to local road hauliers. This decline accelerated rapidly after the second world war and eventually almost half of the rail network was lost because of abysmal investment and political interference.

Now however, it is a completely different story with passenger numbers on a 70 year high and over 92% of all trains arriving at their destination on time. The volume of goods traffic also continues to increase with most of the major supermarkets now using the rail network avoiding the grid-locked roads in towns and cities. A major success story in this region is the rise of First Hull Trains. Prior to the inception of this company, there was only one direct rail link between Hull and London. Ten years on, the long distance operator boasts eight return weekday services to King's Cross, all of which call at Selby and Howden. Earlier this year, First Hull Trains installed a pioneering passenger information system at Howden station powered by wind and solar energy.

The Hull to Scarborough service operated by Northern Rail has seen seven years of continuous passenger growth. Significant timetable improvements have been introduced following five years of continual investment by Network Rail to upgrade the route at a cost of several million pounds. Extra commuter trains now run from Hull to Bridlington in late afternoon/early evening throughout the week and a full Sunday service up to Bridlington and Scarborough is provided all the year round.

Northern Rail has attributed the substantial increase in passenger numbers on the Hull to Scarborough line to the support given by the Rail Development Humber and the Community Rail Partnerships they manage. The Rail Development Humber Board's regular meetings with Network Rail and all train operating companies have resolved many station issues and ensured that the region speaks with 'one voice' over funding and infrastructure matters. One such issue currently being discussed with the train operating companies which provide services linking the east and west coasts, may possibly result in additional train services between Hull, Leeds and Manchester, including extra trains calling at Howden station en route to Manchester Airport.

The talk was followed by extensive participation by members of the audience. Questions were raised regarding the stations at Goole and Howden together with queries on the availability and frequency of local train services. David Walford provided a comprehensive response and promised to discuss some of the points raised direct with the train operating companies involved.

Humber Accord

Members of The Humberside Accord met to discuss a venture to celebrate The 2012 Olympics under the heading Olympics for U3A: Exploring Your Local Waterway and have decided to arrange walks in the summer of 2012 along part of The Trans Pennine Trail in East Yorkshire where it travels along the banks of the Rivers Humber and Ouse.

Each individual U3A will be responsible for arranging a variety of routes to suit their member's requirements and, as the trail in this area covers about 17 miles of mainly river bank walking there is plenty of scope to offer circular walks to suit all comers from 2 miles upwards using a good network of interconnecting footpaths.

All the groups will rendezvous after their walk when refreshments will be partaken either as a picnic or a buffet from the local hostelry.

Wolds U3A Open Day/Autumn Fair

The biennial event will be on 9th September, our usual meeting day. It is when we show the public, who may be interested in joining U3A, what we do and is also an occasion for existing members to meet other members, socialise and perhaps join a new group. It gives members an opportunity to talk to others with similar interests, who may like to form a new group.

Pocklington at War

We would like to place on record our thanks to members of the Pocklington & District U3A group which helped to produce the book, Pocklington at War, by recording people's wartime recollections.

Another achievement of the group was the re-creation of a map of the centre of Pocklington for 1939-45. The map was too big to be included in the book but it can be viewed on the website of Pocklington and District Local History Group at www.pocklingtonhistory.com

Jim and Margaret Ainscough of Stamford Bridge

Grimsby & Cleethorpes U3A.

Our open day is on the 2nd of Sept. It is at the Hotel Elizabeth, which is located just off the A 180 in Grimsby. Leave the A 180 at the Great Coates turn off, and head towards Grimsby, when you get near Grimsby there is a large roundabout, with The Trawl pub opposite. Turn right and it is just up the road on the right. The open day is from 2 to 4 pm. We have nearly all the groups exhibiting. . The post code is DN34 4LX. They are changing the name soon back to the original Humber Royal.

Swanland U3A: Biannual Event: 2011

Following the popularity of our similar event in 2009, YAHR members might like to make a note of next year's occasion.

Yorkshire's Far Horizons: 14th April 2011

The County's maritime contribution to world exploration and the development of trade and trade routes.

** Same location as last year: Hull University Staff House.

***** Speakers:**

Professor Rob Robinson:	The Story
Pete (Shanty Jack) Heyselden:	The Music
James Taylor	The Art.

10.00am – 3.30pm Tickets £25.00 to include morning coffee, lunch with wine and afternoon tea.

To enter our mailing list for further details and booking forms in the Autumn:

Email:- peter@psbryson.karoo.com

Keighley U3A

On the 2nd June 2010 the Keighley Third Age Group held a party to celebrate the 25th anniversary of formation. The Mayor and Mayoress attended and stayed until the end of proceedings. They gave a donation to our funds and would like to join us at the end of their year of office. Feathers in caps! Sadly only 55 members attended which was very disappointing considering the amount of work put in by our Secretary, Mrs. Joan Rye. The food was delicious and it seemed a great pity that our members did not support us more.

Perhaps this might be a salutary lesson for all of us, in that however much thought and planning go into trying to keep organisations up and running (mainly by hardworking committee members) it is all to no avail if the support is not forthcoming from members of the organisation. However, we remain undaunted and are working towards our next social occasion with stout hearts.

Barnsley U3A Memory Training

Your Memory may decline with age, but only if it is not used. Conversely, if it is used it will improve within your lifetime.

This is a bold statement that I came across at the start of my research into techniques designed to help people to sharpen up their short term memories.

After joining Barnsley U3A in March 2009 I wanted to volunteer my time to lead a group and thought that, if I could turn my research into a manageable training course, there may be interest amongst members in memory training.

My interest in the power of memory goes back 25 years to when I stumbled across an interview with the then world memory champion who could memorise the order of shuffled playing cards. I practised using his approach and became convinced the technique worked.

Whilst this was an interesting party trick, a course needs a more practical outcome. I questioned friends to find out what people were most concerned about in terms of their 'failing' memories.

The most common problems were remembering names and faces, and coming away from the shops with intended items missing. What I also found interesting was the acceptance that; 'as we get older our memories get worse as a natural occurrence'.

My research dispels the myth of the natural consequence that ageing has on the memory. Whilst it is accepted that Alzheimer's disease can strike healthy and active people, it is clear that the more we use our brains the more efficient they are likely to become, and the better are our chances of staving off the effects of dementia.

My research has enabled me to put together a short training course comprising four, two-hour sessions with a one-week gap between the sessions.

After running a pilot group for five people I found that this number was about the right size and that people could join in without the inhibition that might be a factor in a larger group.

The initial U3A interest list shows that there are more than 30 names and I am working my way down the list in groups of five or six.

The concentration on the course is on what is called the 'Link' and 'Peg' systems which with a little practice can be easily applied to suit various circumstances. Supporting this is the need to show how people can use their imaginative and associative abilities so that items, names and faces, etc. become memorable and recalled with ease.

Participants carry out a range of exercises once a technique has been explained, understood and learned. Many of those who have completed the course are achieving results which they find surprising. For example by the end of the third session most of them can recall 20 disparate items which they viewed in the list for a couple of minutes.

U3A members have more memory capability than they expected.

They understand the need to practise the techniques and use their imagination involving a spectrum of options including the use of humour, movement and colour through to exaggeration.

Everyone is also encouraged to carry out daily exercises to sharpen their brain nerve endings (synapses). These include cleaning their teeth and writing their names with their weaker hand, counting to 99 in threes and trying to learn something new each day. To support this, it is

recommended that people find time to practise Sudoku, carry out mental arithmetic and complete a few crosswords each week.

The memory training techniques are fine but are only a part of the picture. The research also shows that there is a much larger 'lifestyle' agenda that needs to be addressed if people are to ensure their memories perform to their optimum level. Whilst I try to cover the need for people to exercise physically and mentally, eat healthily and look after their personal well-being, I looked for some method of capturing messages in a credible and authoritative style.

That is where the U3A Resource Centre came up trumps with a DVD entitled: *Ten easy ways to improve your memory*. Perfect! I could not have found a better item to support my course. The DVD pulls everything together in the 57 – minute presentation and gives a clear context to the memory techniques covered as the theme of the course.

I have bought my own copy of the DVD on Amazon for the princely sum of £6 but owe a vote of thanks to our national colleagues without whom I would never have had the chance to review this excellent piece of material.

I don't know what the long term benefits may be for those completing my course but it is gratifying at this stage to hear some of the positive comments from people at the end of the four-week programme.

If nothing else it seems to be proving to U3A members that they have more memory capability than they expected and they just needed to understand and practise the techniques that help to make items memorable.

Alan Swann.

(Alan is happy to talk to anyone on the subject and has a PowerPoint presentation he is willing to show to groups).

Bridlington U3A

Invitation to U3A Choirs and Singing Groups – Bridlington Spa Theatre Complex Saturday 20th November 2010.

The Church & Community Music Festival was founded in 2009. Its aim was to bring together both church based groups and community based amateur group to experience and enjoy participating in public events.

Last year over the 5 days of the Festival some 797 people participated in the event. The total audience numbers reached just over 2,000 and allowing for 40% double/triple counting this means that some 1,400 people attended the events. If we add the participants to the attendees this festival, over the 5 days, embraced 2,200 people in the East Coast Region.

As a result the organisers have decided to repeat the event during the week commencing Saturday 13th November to Sunday 21st November 2010. The local Bridlington Spa Theatre complex has been booked for the final events of the festival.

On Saturday 20th November the plan is to arrange a choir spectacular when choirs from all over the region and beyond can take the stage to show off their skills and enthusiasm. To demonstrate the organisers' commitment to Community Groups they would like to invite U3A choirs and singing groups to join in this special day so we are working with the local Bridlington U3A to bring this about. The

emphasis is primarily on participation and so if your singing group has only just started or you are a well-established group, if you are a small group or a large choir, we would like you to join in. Each group should offer a 20-minute programme. In addition, it has been suggested that on the day we would like all the U3A groups to join together in a mass sing of "You Raise Me Up" but don't let this put your group off taking part as it is simply a suggestion.

Other non-U3A choir will also be participating and hopefully throughout the day we will have a number of workshops.

Please consider entering for this choir day. To help defray the cost there will be a small entry fee of £1.00 per member of the participating group. Non-participants will be able to purchase a day pass ticket. So this should prove to be a great day as U3A members from around the region and beyond as they descend on Bridlington in numbers for what will be an entertaining day.

If you require further information please do not hesitate to contact the Festival Director. At this stage it would be helpful if you could express an early interest in participating in the event by e-mail to paul-low@ccmf.co.uk or by letter as this will help the organisers plan the programme for the day.

Arrangements are being set up with Bridlington Spa Theatre Box Office for booking this event and will include discount rates for parties of 10 or more.

Ilkley & District U3A First Annual Summer School 2010

In July, a full week's programme of group activities was mounted for the first time ever, mainly in two venues, in the centre of Ilkley. Originally it had been intended to invite members of the public and of neighbouring U3As to apply to join groups; however, the response from our own membership was so high that this could not be accommodated. We now realise that if we are to meet a wider audience we will need to plan differently.

The idea was to offer types of activity and subject matter that was different in style and content from our annual programme of some 70 groups. This was largely achieved, although the programme also included some standard favourites, although places were given priority to members wishing to join such groups for the first time.

In all there were 29 groups, mostly one-off sessions, but some with two to four sessions of two hours each during the week. There were a few of our traditional groups operating 'taster' sessions {Table Tennis, Films, Cooking from around the World, Writing Workshops, Scrabble and Mah Jong, Tai Chi, Croquet and Opera on Screen}.

In addition there were activities offered for the first time, some by group leaders working with groups for the first time: About Iceland and the Faroes; Latin and Greek for Beginners; 4-session practical drama workshop on Theatre of Bertholt Brecht; Archeology; Chinese Calligraphy; The Challenge: Religion and Science=Reli-Ance; The World of the Honey Bee; Architecture, Art and Design; Shakespeare's Music and talks on Palestine and Israel and U3A Antecedents. In addition there was a standing exhibition of watercolours and photographs by one of our members.

The week ended with a wine and nibbles social and evaluation gathering for leaders of groups during the week. From our membership of just over 800, there were more than 400 attendees at the events offered. There was no charge for participation since this was the first time for us, so venues were paid for from our resources. The event was generally thought to be successful and will definitely offered next year, with lessons learned from this first occasion being central to the planning for 2011.

David Morton – Chair, Ilkley & District U3A

Hull U3A

In 2009 Hull U3A consisted of a weekly social group, of which all were members, and two other small interest groups in French and Music Appreciation. Our Chairman, Margery Corbally and the management committee recognised that Hull needed to boost membership and expand the number of interest groups.

Three members, Stuart Richardson, Margaret Harper and Rosemary Gilby, formed a sub-committee to increase membership and groups. With a commitment from our Treasurer and a Festival of Learning grant from the Trust we were able to hold three public meetings.

"This Is U3A" was used as a source of marketing and advertising copy. The strap line, "Life is for Learning" was used for the meeting presentation. Posters and information were sent to GPs surgeries, Adult Education sites, and the Library Service. Brief filler pieces about the meetings were printed in our local newspaper.

Three meetings were held on successive Tuesdays in March at accessible venues across the city. The first meeting was held centrally, at the Hull Guildhall. Twenty-four people attended and twenty completed registration forms and listed their interests. The turnout in the east of the city was only three people! None of whom were interested. This embarrassing tale was sent as filler material to the local newspaper, with an explanation of the U3A name. It and gave the date, time and venue of the next meeting, in the west.

Mike Long, The Trust's National Education & Development Officer, came to the west Hull meeting. We needed Mike's expertise. There was only a modest turnout at this meeting but several registered interest and two became members.

It had been our idea to identify any common groups by a quick analysis of registrations and have people from their group on the day. Individual interests were so numerous and varied it was impossible to analyse the results quickly enough. Later analysis of the registration forms from all meetings showed which groups might form and who might lead. We realised another meeting was required and it should be like a start-up U3A.

As part of the Learning Revolution, Hull Museums Education Service is supporting informal adult learning and saw Hull U3A as a valuable partner. The Museums gave us a room at the Streetlife Museum to hold our meeting. The Trust gave a grant for a small advert in the local free paper, delivered to every home.

So, on April 13, many of those who had registered and members of the public attended the Inaugural Meeting, as we called it. There were no presentations. People talked to each other, asked question of Hull U3A members and of Mike Long, who helped us out again to facilitate the group formation. By the end of the afternoon, sixteen people became members and eight new groups were formed.

Hull U3A now offers a range of activities and it seems easier to recruit. Several more members have joined since April. Some interest groups have stalled some groups are already full and second groups are being planned. The experience has been useful. Whole swathes of the city remain unaware of our offering so another recruitment afternoon is very likely.

Stuart Richardson, Secretary, Hull U3A, August 2010



10 U3A'ers went out to walk one day
 Up to Sutton Bank and along the Cleveland Way
 Arrived at our starting point – booted, feeling fine
 When Carol's knee went pop again – and then there were nine.
 9 eager walkers set off down the track
 Steep and tricky walking, but no turning back
 Then just near the bottom by the lovely lake
 Judith took a tumble – and then there were eight.
 With bruises growing visibly Judith's in a fix
 So Pam and Gerry took her back – and then there were six.
 6 intrepid walkers continued on their way,
 Around the lake, across the fields – what a gorgeous day.
 What goes down must rise again, and so through gloomy pines
 We climbed and puffed and panted, following the signs.
 At last on the escarpment, stupendous views surround us
 Coming from the other way – Pam and Gerry found us.
 Back at the cars a weary group finished with the map,
 Carol's bum has gone quite numb and Judith's had a nap.
 A cup of tea, a piece of cake and many thanks to Mary
 It was fun but let us hope the next walk's not so scary!
 Lorna Pope Sherburn & Villages U3A

Sherburn and Villages U3A has been successful in their application to Awards for All, part of the Big Lottery, and has received a grant of £6949.

The grant will be spent mainly on equipment and venue hire to give us, still in our first year of existence, a great boost in providing a new service to everyone in the local community. Some will be spent on publicity as we have found there are a lot of people round our area who have never heard of U3A and are still a bit suspicious of the words 'University' and 'Age' in our title. We are spreading the word with leaflets, posters, articles in local press and Mature Times, and our presence at the several village Galas and Festivals where we do a lot of talking.

We are so pleased that the Big Lottery (Awards for All) has seen the potential of U3A and the opportunities that it can offer to people. We know that retirement for some means a frightening loss of identity, status, social activity and income and are working to show that it needn't be. This grant will allow us to increase the options and opportunities that we can provide and build on the foundations laid over the past months.

For further information visit www.sherburnu3a.co.uk

Pensive Septuagenarian

By Youthful standards he is old
And this is all that they can see,
Will they understand when they are told
how energetic his lifestyle used to be?

When he looks back upon the days
when he, like them, was in his teens,
He recalls the more genteel ways
that were the norm, no trainers, no jeans.

He was taught men don't cry and,
it was not the winning but playing the game
that was important; on the other hand
he aspired to be featured in the hall of fame.

Came the time to join the armed forces,
A requirement for all young men of his age,
His fitness maintained, exercising over assault courses
and paid a minimum weekly wage.

Visiting for the first time foreign lands,
Turning strangers into lifelong friends,
Parading with the marching bands,
With no perception of future trends.

Now past his three score years and ten
Does his memory play him tricks?
Was life really so much better when
only the rich had cars and girls were not called chicks?

When housework was a daily grind;
Blacklead the grate, scrub the floor,
Dolly stone the step, my what a bind
when every little task became a chore.

Whilst modern labour saving devices have eased
the load, ethical standards have regressed
and respect for authority has surely decreased,
These thoughts causing him to feel depressed.

With the visible signs of ageing,
The evidence for all those around to see,
He wonders, will the world continue changing?
As quickly through the next half century.

Will those youths, still learning?
Realise that in this weak old frame
There is emotion, there is yearning,
To go out again and play the game.

Derrick Franks

Reading Classical Greek.

Dave Etchell

There must be many interests within the region which are not pursued, purely due to the fact that they are not viable within individual U3As. Factors contributing to this are perhaps, small membership and the specialised or academic nature of the subject.

Two such areas which interest me are Classical Greek and Shakespeare.

In respect of the former there is surely enough interest to form a regional group, members could revise or extend their knowledge of classical or biblical Greek via shared readings and study. Though this is of course open, the preferred venues for meeting would surely be Leeds or Sheffield. Both of these are easily accessed by road and rail and have the advantage of large U3A memberships. Leeds may be the better of the two as at least one of its universities has a classical department.

Shakespeare probably has more scope for regional activities. There are numerous Shakespearian productions in our region's theatres and throughout the summer we also have the various open air productions at National Trust properties and at other locations. Stratford on Avon is only a couple of hours drive for most of us, thus regional coach trips are a possibility. There are numerous productions in adjacent counties, the Stamford Shakespeare season, being a notable example. The regional newsletter could provide a suitable vehicle for subsequent reviews of productions seen.

Interest should be expressed, initially, to our Regional Trustee – Anne Firth.

Editor's Note

Dave founded and ran the now defunct Doncaster U3A Shakespeare group. He is the author of two volumes of poetry. Sonnets from the Iliad and The Lych-gate (songs and Sonnets of Autumn).

Both were reviewed in U3A News by Francis Beckett. He hopes to have his third volume: Sonnets from the Odyssey, in print by the end of the year.

Shared Learning Projects (SLPs)

Shared Learning Projects are research projects which focus on a topic proposed by an institution (such as a museum, art gallery, stately home or library) or proposed by U3A members themselves on a theme (such as e.g. a river, town, person or a philosophy). One of the main objectives is to undertake some stimulating work which will be of benefit to both participants and to the institution in which the project is carried out. I was disappointed to see that we only have one Shared Learning Project (SLP) listed as having been carried out in Yorkshire and The Humber Region – Ilkley's project examining the industrial revolution from, a local point of view, showing local reaction to national trends. I am sure that many research projects have been carried out by U3As in our region – they just haven't been submitted to the national office for inclusion. I hope that if your U3A has been involved in a project you will share it with others.

If anyone is interested in starting a project or has any ideas for one, I would be happy to discuss it with you.

I would be particularly interested if you have done any work, or are interested in being involved in, a project about the English Civil War in Yorkshire and The Humber. For those who may be interested there will be a 17th Century exhibition in Leeds during the first week in October.

Christine Ball. scball@tesco.net, 0113 2687808

Website

Alas we have not yet been able to arrange to create a Regional Website, in the meantime we will be using the Regional page on the National Website.

Derrick Franks