



Yorkshire and the Humber Region

Newsletter
August 2011

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Dates of General Meetings, and Workshop for

General Group Coordinators

Regional Study Day August 23 2011 - Apply Now!

2012 Askham Bryan Event—your help is needed!

Contributions from around the Region

Please send copy (preferably unformatted in Word) for next edition

to shelagh@woolliscroft.com by 31 October 2011

From the Chairman

1. Dates for Your Diary – action required

There will be a Regional General Meeting on the morning of 3rd November, 2011. The venue will be the Trades Club, Frenchgate Centre, Doncaster. Tea/Coffee will be available from 10.00am, the meeting to commence at 10.30 am.

Buffet lunch will be provided after which there will be a Workshop for Group Coordinators.

There will be a charge of £6.00 per member.

All U3As are reminded they may send two representatives to these meetings. Should any U3A wish to send more than two representatives please consult Derrick Franks.

ACTION - Will you please let me have the names of the members who will be attending, also the names of those members who will be attending the Group Co-ordinators workshop, by 14 October.

There will be a second Regional General Meeting at the same venue on 2nd February 2012. Further details will be issued nearer the date

2. Misnomer

Alas there seems to be a tendency creeping in for U3As to refer to themselves as 'Groups' or 'Branches' which is incorrect.

Each U3A is an independent unit, in my own case I am a member of Doncaster U3A, and within Doncaster U3A there are a number of different activity groups.

Doncaster U3A, along with 42 others, is a unit within Yorkshire and The Humber Region.

Where there are a number of U3As who collaborate with each other, such as the 'Humber Accord,' these are known as 'Networks'.

3. Newsletter

On behalf of the Management Committee I wish to thank Tony Baker, Secretary Thirsk U3A, who has responded to our plea to help spread the word about the Regional Newsletter. As a result of members of Thirsk U3A being asked a large number of them have agreed to receive the newsletter by email.

4. Askham Bryan – action required

We **urgently** need to know which groups will be actively participating with stands, demonstrations, workshops etc at the Askham Bryan event next year. We will also need volunteers on the day to act as guides, distributing programmes, car park attendants etc. **Will any U3A which has not responded to my previous request for information please let me know the situation as soon as possible, using the form on the next page.**

We would also like to strengthen the sub-committee for this event, if any of your members are willing to join us would you please let me have their details.

5. Management Committee

We are pleased to announce that Chris Leak has joined us on the Management Committee. Chris is the current Chairman of Hull U3A and will be responsible for the maintenance of **the YAHR Website**, which he is in the process of setting up. Chris was elected as a casual vacancy in accordance with section 7 (iv) b of the constitution.

Derrick Franks.

REPORT OF THE REGIONAL TRUSTEE TO YORKSHIRE & THE HUMBER REGION – YAHR - JULY 2011.

The **Regional AGM** was held on 12th April 2011 in York, attended by Mike Long, National Education & Development Officer, who spoke after lunch on “The Challenge of Finding Group Leaders. Mike then answered questions from his audience and handed out leaflets. Mike retired from his NEDO position last month, although he will be attending the Conference/AGM in September.

The Regional Committee still has vacancies for a Secretary and a Treasurer, however the good news is that we welcome two new members to the Regional Committee – Shelagh Woolliscroft (Sheffield U3A) and Chris Leak (Hull U3A). Shelagh has volunteered to be the editor of the regional newsletter and Chris will take over the running of the regional website. Many thanks to both!

The Region now has 43 U3As, with other possibilities to be followed up by our team of Regional Trustee, Education & Development Officer Carole Millin, and the four EDCs Derrick Franks, David Wright, Roger Watkins and David Morton. (The Education Development Contacts volunteer their time to following up and assisting the start of new U3As).

There will hopefully be a larger regional attendance at this year’s Conference/AGM in Nottingham. **We will be holding a regional get-together on Saturday 18th September from 5pm to 6pm**, the actual room/venue is not known at the moment, however I will inform everyone as soon as possible, so that we can meet up with ‘old’ friends and make new ones.

In future I will be the **Shared Learning Project (SLP) contact** in our region, so that any U3A in YAHR, contemplating an SLP with libraries/Universities/colleges, would contact myself, and I would inform the SLP Adviser Jennifer Anning for her records. Ideas and suggestions for SLPs across the Region would be useful please.

Thank you very much for the invitations I have received to attend events in the Region, I appreciate the chance to see what the different U3As and their members contribute positively to the U3A. There will be a **Regional Study Day on 23rd August 2011**. “John Martin: Painter of the Apocalypse”, £6. For the day. See flyer and booking form on Page 6

In 2012 the U3A will be celebrating its 30th Anniversary and Regions will be celebrating this with Special Events. 2007 was the last time our Region had a 25th Celebration Event at Askham Bryan College of Agriculture near York and the 30th Anniversary would be a good time to have another in August 2012.

Regional Trustee’s Diary dates since April were:

14th April – invitation to Wolds U3A Lunch.

Swanland U3A also on 14th April – “Yorkshire’s Far Horizons”

19th April Doncaster U3A AGM.

24th May – Launch of Filey U3A – Inaugural Meeting on 28th July.

30th June – Sheffield U3A'S Silver Jubilee Celebrations at Wortley Hall, Sheffield. Attended by National Chairman Ian Searle and over 600 people, an excellent event.

14th July – Inaugural Meeting Anlaby, Willerby and Kirk Ella U3A.

I shall be retiring as Regional Trustee at the Conference/AGM in September and the result will be announced there of the election of my successor. My very best wishes to both nominees, David Wright and David Morton. I am sure the Region will be in safe hands in the future and will continue to flourish.

My thanks to the members of the YAHR Regional Committee for your continuing and unfailing support, Derrick, David W, Vera, Roger, Hilary, Shelagh, David, Chris. I would like to thank all the U3As and their members for their warm and friendly welcomes.

Best Wishes,

Anne Firth,

Regional Trustee for Yorkshire & The Humber.

I am sure that we would all like to thank Anne for her hard work over the past three years—Ed

Askham Bryan 15 August 2012 – Will your U3A be there? Please let us know!

Lots of members have been asking for another regional get-together! So your committee are planning a Grand Day Out at Askham Bryan Horticultural College, on Wednesday 15 August 2012.

This will be a wonderful opportunity to showcase your U3A! Art, crafts, music, drama, dancing, outdoor games, indoor games, languages, science and technology, discussions, history projects, displays and demonstrations – all are possible.

But we can't get much further with the planning or start to pursue sources of financial help until we know that a reasonable number of U3As want to be exhibitors. So we need to hear from you that you are intending to participate. Please use the pro forma below to let Derek know your initial ideas and alert him to any need for display stand(s), furniture, equipment etc by 30 September 2011.

Name of U3A.....

Name of Contact for Askham Bryan.....

Contact's e-mail..... Tel No.....

Activity 1.....

For this we would need.....

Activity 2.....

For this we would need.....

Activity 3.....

For this we would need.....

Activity 4.....

For this we would need.....

Yes, we will find volunteers to help! No, we cannot help (tick one box)

Please send to derrick@franks1356.freeseerve.co.uk or phone him on 01977 620192

John Martin: Painter of Apocalypse

YAHR Regional Study Day Tuesday 23 August 2011

10.30 am -3.30 pm (Refreshments available from 10.00 am)

The Arundel Room, Millennium Galleries Sheffield

The dramatic, Biblically inspired work of John Martin, the painter born in Haydon Bridge, Northumberland, in 1789 is being given proper recognition once again.

A new exhibition, which brings together the largest collection of Martin's work ever to be assembled, opened in Newcastle in early March 2011, is currently in Sheffield and transfers to Tate Britain in October 2011 as the major London winter exhibition.

In his lifetime Martin, painter and engraver of the 'apocalyptic sublime' was, like Dickens, adept in capturing the emotions and appetite for sensation in the general population. In the later 19th century his reputation was high throughout Europe and, in America where his Judgement pictures toured in the 1850s, the tropes and images of Martin contributed to the concept of the 'American sublime', influenced early cinema, and went on to shape digital media and film in the 21st century. Yet, in Britain, unlike his friend and rival painter Turner, for over a century the name and work of John Martin was forgotten or reduced to a footnote.

The Study Day, which is being organised with the kind assistance of Museums Sheffield, will be led by **Dr Barbara Morden**, author of a new book on John Martin, '*Apocalypse Now!*' Barbara's illustrated talk will help us to understand Martin the man and the context of his paintings of Biblical catastrophe and visions of paradise. This will prepare us for our visit to the exhibition, after which there will be an opportunity for questions and discussion. Copies of Barbara's book (which she will gladly sign for you) will be on sale in the Galleries shop or on-line from Amazon.

Tickets (which include tea or coffee from 10.00 am) cost £6. You are invited to make your own arrangements for lunch – the choice of local cafes is wide or you may wish to bring a picnic.

This is unique opportunity to explore the work of a major British artist with one of the UK's foremost authorities and to see the biggest collection of his paintings in our lifetime. **Do book early using the form below – places are limited.** Your ticket(s), and any further information will then be sent to you. Please note, no tickets will be sent between 1st and 12th August as I shall be out of the country.

Queries to Shelagh Woolliscroft on 01246 416139

Please send me tickets for The Regional Study Day on John Martin, 23 August 2011

I enclose a cheque, payable to YAHR, forand an A5 stamped self-addressed envelope.

Name (s).....

Address.....

Telephone Number.....U3A.....

Please send form, cheque and SAE to:

Shelagh Woolliscroft

2 Leabrook Road, Dronfield Woodhouse, S18 8YS

HANDS ACROSS THE POND Colin Brown, Doncaster U3A

On a recent visit to New York – a 70th and 75th birthday present for Judy and I from our sons – I was very pleasantly reminded that despite our many differences there is still a great deal more than just language that links our two countries.

The first Friday we were there was the day of the Royal Wedding, and whilst it's not my intention to dwell on that occasion having secretly felt glad that I might escape much of the saturated coverage I knew it would receive at home, I was still very impressed by the way it was covered by a number of their TV channels for an obviously enthralled audience. Being an ardent republican I found it faintly amusing and quite touching that a country that had renounced monarchy should show so much interest in ours. Every minute detail of the ceremony was pored over and analysed, experts were identifying all the notables present, and a panel of be-gowned and be-jewelled socialites whooped and shrieked as only American ladies can, over Kate's dress and the delectable shape of Pippa Middleton's bottom! Outside cameras visited affluent Long Island homes where wedding parties had been going on from 5am their time, and union flag strewn bars in Greenwich Village where ex-pat Brits and their friends were merrily intoxicated at 7.30 in the morning when my wife switched on the hotel room television. But what impressed me most was something much more mundane. Whether we have visited New York or not, all of us are familiar with the city's ubiquitous yellow taxis and every second one we saw was emblazoned with a triangular rooftop illuminated sign brightly painted with the union flag and the legend 'Congratulations Will and Kate' as if the happy couple were every New Yorker's next door neighbour. That evening we met some friends from Brooklyn in a newly opened micro-brewery and drank a toast in surprisingly good American pale ale not to the newlyweds but to my youngest son Ben, who's birthday it was!

On the Sunday morning it was a lovely sunny and warm 1st of May, so what else should one do but take a stroll through Central Park which, incidentally, is much much bigger than one realises. Our meanderings took us unintentionally over to the west side of the park from where, through some trees, we could see the now infamous green-roofed Dakota Building outside of which John Lennon was shot and killed in 1980. This saddening fact was reinforced when we encountered an unobtrusive green notice board announcing we were entering 'Strawberry Fields', and suddenly we were amongst hundreds of others all marking time waiting to file reverently through the narrow pathways that make up this now much frequented part of the park dedicated as a Garden of Peace by Yoko Ono and the then Mayor, Edward I Koch, to John's memory in 1985. There were obviously a number of organised tour parties many of whom were the camera strewn Japanese who crop up wherever you are in the world, but one group who took my attention was made up of young people, mostly white youngsters in their late teens and early twenties, all wearing matching T shirts announcing their Spring Tour to the Big Apple. Who they were was made clear as we approached a secluded section where the path had been widened to accommodate the now famous circular mosaic in black and white tiles with the word 'Imagine' at its centre. The mosaic is perhaps ten to twelve feet in diameter and these young people had formed a double circle around it, boy girl, boy girl, and were singing very quietly but quite beautifully and in perfect harmony the words of John Lennon's song 'In My Life'. The effect, in this secluded glade, was quite magical and I was all but reduced to tears. I stood and listened until they'd finished, and as they broke up I couldn't help but say to one of them that, as an Englishman, I had found that very moving. The girl beamed, "Thank you kindly, Sir", she said politely, "we are the youth choir of the Southern Baptist Church from Birmingham, Alabama", and I thought how marvellous it was that these young people who weren't even born when John Lennon was killed were still sufficiently affected by his musical legacy and the message it left behind, to pay their respects in this way.

They say things, particularly unusual ones, happen in threes, and so it was. We didn't want to leave New York without seeing a Broadway show, so the boys took it upon themselves to go and queue one afternoon at the kiosk in Times Square for late, but more importantly cheap, tickets for anything that was going. They returned with tickets for a play called 'Jerusalem', about which none of us knew a thing! It turned out to be a British play by a writer called Jez Butterworth, set in rural Wiltshire starring the Shakespearian actor Mark Rylance. It was a three hour marathon of a play, and during one of the intervals when everyone was standing stretching their legs, I got into conversation with some people sitting behind us – a couple from Toronto, Canada, and two ladies from Montana – and asked how they were getting on with the accents of the actors which were quite thick west-country 'burrs'. To my surprise they assured me they could understand most of it, but could not tell there was any difference between it and any other British accent! I thought this quite surprising, and wondered why it was. Perhaps just a matter of exposure. However, the point I am making is that, despite his accent, Mark Rylance delivered an absolutely stunning performance of such power, virtuosity and sheer brilliance, that at the final curtain everyone in the theatre was on their feet cheering and stamping their approval. I am not a frequent theatre-goer, but I have never seen or experienced a standing ovation like it. We later learned that Rylance is tipped to win this year's 'Tony' award for best actor in a Broadway show, and I was struck once again at how close we are to America despite the three thousand miles of ocean between us. A memorable holiday at a memorable time, for we were there to witness the patriotic outpourings after it was announced that Bin Laden had been 'nailed'. I can't wait to go again to celebrate my 80th.....knees permitting!! ovation like it. We later learned that Rylance is tipped to win this year's 'Tony' award for best actor in a Broadway show, and I was struck once again at how close we are to America despite the three thousand miles of ocean between us. A memorable holiday at a memorable time, for we were there to witness the patriotic outpourings after it was announced that Bin Laden had been 'nailed'. I can't wait to go again to celebrate my 80th.....knees permitting!!

Regional Memory Course Project – Training the Trainers

Our region has been offered the chance for members to be trained to deliver short courses which aim to improve the memory.

Some of you will recall Alex McMinn talking at a YAHR General Meeting about 'Well-Being in Later Life' where he referred to this element of Aughton and Ormskirk's 'Mind Gym' project.

The memory course has been designed and developed by Sylvia Dillon, who is both a clinical psychologist and a member of Aughton and Ormskirk U3A. She has worked in collaboration with the Universities of Liverpool and Lancaster. The course has been independently evaluated but, equally importantly, those who have undergone the training find that it does help with memory problems.

The course has been run with groups of up to 12 people and has taken the form of 4 one and a half hour sessions. The course leaders need to understand group dynamics and counselling techniques. This is because a sensitive topic like memory loss can make course members very anxious. So Sylvia feels that members with a background in psychology, occupational therapy, counselling or similar would be best suited.

For each course there need to be two 'presenters' and two administrators. So we are looking to train up a number of members who can then work in groups of four. Sylvia and her colleagues are willing to come over for a day in the autumn and we have in mind one of the following: 5th 13th or 20th October. Sylvia is currently consulting her colleagues to find which date would be most convenient. The venue would be Doncaster.

If a) you feel you have the appropriate skills, b) you are willing to be part of the delivery team, and c) you are likely to be available in October to participate in the training, **please contact Shelagh Woolliscroft (Sheffield U3A) after 14 August on 01246 416139.**

SHEFFIELD'S "GRAND" DAY OUT

What a wonderful celebration of 25 years of Sheffield U3A we had on Thursday 30 June in the beautiful setting of Wortley Hall. About 650 of us were joined by local and national guests as we discovered the huge range of educational, creative and leisure opportunities shared by our members. Seeing so many different activities in one place made us proud, if we weren't already, to be part of this wonderful organisation.

Our guests were equally impressed. They included the Lord Mayor of Sheffield, Sylvia Dunkley and her consort, John Dunkley; The Mayor of Barnsley, Karen Dyson and her consort, Martin Dyson; Ian

Searle, Chair, National U3A Trust; Derrick Franks, Chair, YAHR (Yorkshire and Humberside Region U3A); Anne Firth, Regional Trustee, YAHR; Alan Swann, Chair, Barnsley U3A; John Carter, Chair, Rotherham U3A and Ian McMillan, local poet, the Bard of Barnsley, who gave the official "welcome" to us all. This was one of the many highlights of the day. He had us all in stitches!



Around 50 different groups put in an enormous effort and ingenuity to share their considerable expertise and obvious joy in their activities. Both inside and outside the hall was a buzz of activity. There are too many groups to mention them all here .

The Science and Technology Group let us try our hand at pedal power.

The range of arts and handicrafts in the ballroom was a delight to the eye. Well done to all those members who managed the "orienteering challenge" to find their way there. Members of Art Group 1 showed a beautiful group painting to celebrate our Jubilee.



Some of us tried our hand at hand bell ringing. It took some concentration but the outcomes were very satisfying. The Singing for Pleasure group entertained us in the lounge both morning and afternoon as well as the French Group and we even had singing in Sanskrit! The comic opera shown by the Enjoying Opera Group was so popular we had to find extra chairs.



The range of languages represented was impressive: As well as French and Sanskrit there was Classical Greek, Latin, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish. There was a variety of cards and board games to try – even an interactive bridge game which proved a challenge to those trying out the bidding.



The fine weather was a boon to the many outside activities. Board games on the grass, bowling and croquet were all popular and the five different walks were a huge success. Our neighbours from Barnsley Line Dancing Group entertained us and a few brave souls joined in.



The Oral History Group treated us to a scene from the life of Bess of Hardwick and the 6th Earl of Shrewsbury from the history of Manor Castle and what a setting they had– the steps and terrace of Wortley!



One of the most popular displays was a collection of World War Two photos and memorabilia belonging to SU3A members. Like all of us there, Ian McMillan was moved by the story of Otto Jakubovic and in the photo Otto is telling Ian about how he was “liberated” from Auschwitz-Birkenau and showing him the jacket with the label “Leufer” he wore as a runner for an SS officer. This role probably saved his life. Otto’s story is written in our new publication, “Lest We Forget”. If you would like a copy (price £5) you can order from Dot Sutcliffe (0114 268 5918).

What a day! The sun, gardens and hall all provided the perfect back drop for OUR GRAND DAY OUT. The most important ingredient, however, was the great mix of activities and members who made this such a memorable day.

Wetherby U3A Milestone – 400th member

Wetherby U3A has reached a milestone in that it has recently registered its 400th member since the inauguration just over a year ago in April 2010. The member in question is Mrs Julia Dobbs from Boston Spa. At the April Monthly Meeting, she was presented with a bouquet and a special certificate by chairman Mary Bentham, one of the 2 founder members and member No. 1.

Wetherby U3A presently has 40+ groups and information can be found on our website.

www.wetherbyu3a.org.uk



Wetherby U3A Founder Members receive joint Wetherby Townsperson of the Year Award

The joint winners of the Wetherby Townsperson of the Year were announced by the President of the Wetherby Lions, at the annual Pram race. The winners, who received a record number of nominations, were Mary Bentham and Lesley Newnham, the founder members of Wetherby & District U3A. The presentation of engraved silver salvers was made by Wetherby Mayor Cindy Bentley. In her speech the mayor praised the work done by these two ladies in creating and guiding the tremendous development of this organisation, which now has more than 400 members and over 40 groups.

Their achievement can be summed up in a quote from one of the nomination forms:

“The evidence of the success of the U3A is demonstrated in the growing number of members. The numerous activities that they are involved in are beneficial both physically and mentally. What Mary and Lesley have achieved for Wetherby town is success beyond all expectations and a life line to many retired residents”.



The Swanland U3A Choir

It is surely not unusual, within all the U3As in this country, to find a choral group. But a four-part choir of 40 to 50 men and women, capable of presenting compositions of up to eight parts, encompassing six centuries? We consider ourselves fortunate to be able to be at its concerts.



Directed by its conductor, Di Ford, and with soprano soloists Delia Fletcher and Pamela Lamb and their pianists Peter Sproston and Dorothy Coates (Peter also accompanied by the choir) they presented a remarkably varied and challenging programme at Willerby Methodist Church on 20th May in aid of The Teenage Cancer Trust.

Twenty choral items were interspersed with connected readings given by choir members John Pearson, John Roach, Peter Bingham and John Barrett - the brevity of the latter's 'Drinking Song' being due, presumably, to the liquid's potency.

Morley's well-known 'Now is the Month of Maying' opened the evening's entertainment, bouncing along in fine, well-articulated style. Equally virile was the final item, a selection from 'Oklahoma' - perhaps the twentieth century's version of Morley's frolic from the sixteenth. The many references to Shakespeare, both in words and music, emphasised and related to our love of our heritage, and a welcome re-hearing of David Gow's songs from 'Twelfth night' showed the care with which the choir regards good music of the present time.

This devotion to the skills and arts of conducting and singing were again evident in the first performance of Geoffrey Kinder's 'Tarantella', specially written for the choir. This moved along as you would expect from its title, and as new music needs to be heard more than once, we hope it will be included in future programmes. The composer, present at the concert, received grateful and warm applause. He is a good friend of our U3A for he gives an occasional Thursday talk which is always well attended.

The two soprano soloists pleased us greatly with their choices. Pamela Lamb gently invoked Berkeley Square and its Nightingale with her inviting depiction of that iconic tale, and Delia Fletcher sang two Shakespeare songs to music by Martin Shaw and, in the second half, Ivor Novello's 'Waltz of my Heart', the purity of her singing giving, as always, much pleasure.

The care taken by all who were involved in the concert, not forgetting those who provided the excellent refreshments afterwards, which raised £700 for The Teenage Cancer Trust, was greatly appreciated.

My New Family

I had always been a family man. Now my family implored me “you need company, Dad”. My wife had died a year before.

I remembered hearing of U3A. The local library put me in touch.

Our Secretary was very helpful. I had many questions.

I joined four groups that winter – “Singing for Pleasure” “Tai Chi” “Current Affairs Discussion” and “Music Appreciation”. Others called, for example – “Languages” and “Literature” but hey! – I was still learning how to cook!

I made a point of attending the monthly meetings, at which I’ve enjoyed hearing visiting speakers and meeting members from other groups. The Committee use these to keep us up-to-date on developments.

Three years on I joined the Committee. It is hard work in a shrinking manufacturing town but when Mike Long from The Third AGE Trust visited recently his comments were encouraging.

Our U3A is challenging but cheerful and that is what I like about a “family”.

Gerry Mitchell

Keighley U3A

The Beginning, Middle... and Continuation

That’s how Wynne Royston described the story of her life at her 95th birthday party in July. It was a terrific occasion. Wynne had invited about 100 guests, as well as the U3A choir. And as her son John said: ‘Mum will want to make a speech.’ She did, standing for about 20 minutes before asking her audience ‘Do you mind if I sit down?’

She told of Hamor, whom she had had her eye on since he came to the same school when she was 8.

Many years later he shyly suggested they might go walking after choir practice. She agreed, and then added, ‘We went walking for 49 years’. She told of her three sons: John was with her at her party. Another son, David and her nephew, Stephen came over from Australia, to be with her on the day, and the other sadly died as a baby. Other members of her family had travelled from as far as London and South Wales.

At the end of her speech Wynne read one of her poems, going through ages 90 to 99. Only 99, Wynne? Where’s your ambition?

Then there was a dancing and singing display, followed by entertainment from our very own choir. And it was all held at the glamorous venue of the Banqueting Suite at Oakwell Football ground.

Wynne says she received 105 cards, 8 of which were the same. She specifically asked that people did not give her presents, but if they wished they could give on the day to Barnsley Hospice. The sum of £540.20 was given. Wynne wants to thank everyone for their good wishes to her, and their generosity to the Hospice.

Congratulations, Wynne. The whole of Barnsley U3A is proud of you.

Hacked off!

It was 9.16 a.m. when I got the first phone-call. "Ah, I didn't think you'd be in Valencia" said the caller, "since I was only speaking to you last night at the governors' meeting."

Apparently he, alongside my 750 other contacts, had received a message from 'me', entitled 'Stranded' and saying I had been mugged at gun point in Valencia and all my belongings stolen. I needed to borrow money since it would take a couple of days for the bank to send me a replacement credit card. Would he please wire funds via Western Union transfer. The message included an e-mail address and a hotel desk phone number.

That phone-call was the first of hundreds I received over the following two days. In between reassuring people that I was OK, I tried to get into my e-mail. No go – the hacker had changed the password. I contacted the police who logged the incident and advised me that when I was back on line I should explain to everyone that it was a hoax: beyond this advice they could do nothing. Such hacking activity is becoming increasingly common – they suspect it originates in Africa but haven't the resources to tackle it.

Since I had not divulged my password to anyone I was anxious to know how 'they' had got access to it. The most plausible explanation was that I had used a dodgy internet café. A device is inserted under the keyboard which records the key-strokes, and by these means one's password can be worked out. I did use a café in Greece back in February.

The first job was obviously to get back on line and then change my password. Using my partner's account I e-mailed Google who asked me to fill in a form, giving information that would prove that I was in fact the rightful owner of the account. This took three days. Eventually I was back in, changed my password and started writing to apologise. It was at this stage I noticed that the hackers had inserted the letter 'e' in front of the ampersand in all my contacts' addresses. Presumably this was to buy them time, for it was time-consuming to go through all 750 contacts, deleting the 'e'. I took the opportunity to delete all but the ones I use regularly.

Then I got an e-mail from Yahoo asking if I wanted this account that had been set up. I cancelled it immediately. But I didn't think to correct the hacker's instruction to divert replies to it. In Google this is simple – you just click on e-mail settings and follow the instructions. So for a couple of weeks I didn't receive replies to my e-mails – they are floating in cyber space.

As far as I know, no one tried to send money. They were deterred by the language used in the message which didn't sound like me; by the use of the terms 'cell-phone' and 'wire funds'; and by the request to send money to a yahoo account. Several people said they had received an almost identical message at some time.

The moral of this story is: beware of internet cafes. But if this does happen to you, don't panic, it is fairly easy to put things right. And if you receive an e-mail from someone mugged at gun-point, don't whatever you do send them money before checking first!

Shelagh Woolliscroft, Sheffield U3A

Body Language By Ian Searle, Chairman, Third Age Trust

A one-armed man at Tesco's stacked trolleys in their stand
As, taking one, my wife said, "Let me give you a hand."
Such blunders are so easy when we our wits abandon,
Arguing with amputees, without a leg to stand on.
Or nodding to a stammerer, for whom to speak is pain,
And telling him so clumsily, "You can say that again!"

The problem is our language and idiom, I fear,
Which cannot be avoided by turning a deaf ear
Or even a blind eye, nor yet, choosing to be bolder,
Can you attempt evasion by turning a cold shoulder.
Think of all the idioms with which we come to grips,
The phrases tripping off your tongue or hanging on your lips.

'Keep your hair on,' 'Chance your arm,' and similar requests
Help you keep stiff upper lips while you throw out your chests.
Keeping your eye upon the ball's not easy, as I've found,
Especially at those times when you have one ear to the ground.
Setting hand to plough, as well, pursued by flocks of gulls,
Is quite impossible at times, with fingers on the pulse.

A blind eye you may turn to this and over it not linger,
For idioms will outlive us; we need not lift a finger.
But while the English language will remain for years alive,
I sometimes think for 'metaphor' we should read 'metaphive.'
I can find myself in two minds yet not have a single thought,
Be long of tooth, broad of mind and yet of breath be short.

I'm going round in circles, quite dangerous in the street,
Simply because, as I've been told, I have - yes - two left feet.
Putting my best foot forward, but casting my eyes down,
I split my sides with laughter, am creased up when I frown,
But laughter brings me stitches, while drink makes my head spin,
And people who annoy me get underneath my skin.

Some tongues are sharp and some are forked, but how can eyes be peeled?
I'm well down on my uppers, but others are well heeled.
A man can be hot-headed yet give an icy stare,
Another is bull-headed, (or sore-headed, like a bear)
Out of your tiny skull with drink, it's some poor state you're in,
But don't take fright or else you might jump right out of your skin.

Festival of Choirs and Voices – Bridlington Spa Saturday 19th November 2011

Calling all U3A Choirs

Following last year's successful choir festival, Bridlington U3A is once again teaming up with the organisers of the East Coast Churches and Community Music Festival to promote the Festival of Choirs and Voices. The event draws choirs from around the Yorkshire Region and beyond with some 10 choirs taking part in last year's events. Bridlington U3A were delighted to welcome a number of U3A choirs to the festival and hopefully more of the regions U3A choirs will join in this year's event. It doesn't matter if your choir has only just started to sing together or you have been singing together for some time you are more than welcomed to take part. Last year 70 members of the Barnsley U3A choir came along and although they had only been singing together for a few months, they gave an excellent performance. We were also thrilled to have Swanland U3A choir on board with their leader Dianne Ford who is the U3A National Co-Coordinator for Music. Of course Bridlington U3A choirs, as joint hosts, were in the line-up. It was a great and enjoyable day.



This year the Festival of Choirs and Voices once again will be held in the Bridlington Spa Theatre Complex, which is an excellent venue having been refurbished a couple of years ago.

The programme for this year is currently being assembled so, U3A choirs of our region, why not give it a go and register your choir into this year's festival?

To do so e-mail Paul Lowe (Festival Director and member of the Bridlington U3A) at paul-lowe@ccmf.co.uk or call 01262 677835 or contact Sue Gollop at sue.gollop@tiscali.co.uk

Paul Lowe (Festival Director)

Sue Gollop (Chair Bridlington U3A)