

Newsletter

Issue No 6/10, July 2008

**THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE
SETTLE DISTRICT**

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FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Dear Friends

In his article in this summer's U3A News, Peter Kingston of the Guardian reported that 1.4 million fewer people have taken part in adult education in the first two years since the government's decision to progressively withdraw from publicly funded adult education (see "How they are killing off learning for fun"). One of the beneficiaries of the government's retreat from publicly funded adult education has been the U3A, with a large uptake in membership at a national level. Perhaps the Settle U3A will see a jump in membership next year, as "refugees" from publicly funded courses seek new ways of continuing their courses. If so, the implementation of new seating arrangements for our monthly meeting at Victoria Hall, which give us a substantially bigger seating capacity, will have been timely.

One type of potential member we shall sadly not be able to welcome into the U3A are people in groups who have lost their public funding and wish to pay a tutor to keep their former group operating on a private basis. Last month the committee had to reject an enquiry from such a group on the grounds that the U3A constitution does not allow payments to be made to tutors.

With best wishes

Tony Stephens

FROM THE GROUPS CO-ORDINATOR

Main meeting on 14 August

If your group "leader" is likely to be unable to get to the meeting in August when we show what the groups do, perhaps YOU could take the initiative yourself in encouraging others to join your group. Come along with examples of what you do—either as a mini-exhibition on part of a table or as a performance on stage.

Please let me know beforehand if you need a table or 5 minutes on stage.

Alison Tyas

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

Exercise: There will be no meeting in August (except as notified on **14 August**).

Beginners French: At our fortnightly sessions we have read and talked and listened and sung and watched films, all in French; we have even studied a little grammar! After all our hard work we are now taking a break until October. If you have a little French, even very rusty, come and join us then.

Bonnes vacances à tous!

Anne Richer

Continuing French: A cornucopia of European interests this year—eg the French property market, the rising price of the French baguette, the Edith Piaf film “La Vie en Rose”, a selection of La Fontaine’s Fables, Pagnol’s filmscript/play from the 1930s “La Femme du Boulanger”, water conservation, traffic signs, holiday health issues, fortnightly French news bulletins alternating with articles from the French press on a range of issues including mobile phones for tinies and Swedish swimming baths. Phew! It’s no wonder we are ready for a break but no doubt we will return refreshed and ready for more, come the autumn.

Olwyn Bolger and Anne Richer

Line Dancing: Because of our Leader’s current health problems, it is suggested that members check with me beforehand for the next week or two, on 823855 or p.dewey@daelnet.co.uk.

PLD

Listening to Music: There will be no meetings through the summer months. Next meeting on **Monday 12 October**, details later.

Shirley Wolfenden and Janet Stafford

Looking at Old Buildings: **Thursday 24 July**— Visits to

- St Alkelda’s Church, Giggleswick—meet Kathleen Kinder 11.00am
- Queen’s Rock House, 2.00pm.

Please ring me (840451) if you intend to come.

Vanessa Stone

Strollers: Fourteen members (largest number yet) enjoyed a pleasant walk around Giggleswick on 11 June. This included The Harrison Field, Tems Beck and Chestnut walk. On returning to the village, via the church, we then called in at the new “Tearooms” in Giggleswick at the old Post Office. The shop has been transformed very tastefully and we were made most welcome by the proprietor, Karen, and her assistant. Tea, coffee and light refreshment are on offer; also ice-creams. Inside there is seating for 8 and a further 3 in the garden. We can recommend it—well worth a visit.

Next Strollers walk is on **9 July** around Clapham. Meet at the Cricket Club car park at 2.00pm to arrange cars.

Janet Stafford (825449)

Sunday Lunch: In June we went to The Craven Arms at Appletreewick: it was our first visit and the disappointment with it was unanimous. The food ordering system was chaotic and the service virtually non-existent, although to be fair they did say a new manager was expected shortly. The next lunch will be at The Copy Nook at Bolton by Bowland on **20 July**. Please let me know if you are coming.
Audrey Daykin

Walks:

Tuesday 10 June: A group of 14 walkers boarded the train for Kirkby Stephen station in glorious sunshine. From the station the downhill path took us to Halfpenny House, then across the River Eden following "The Poetry Trail". This was a series of stones on which had been carved reflections of the surrounding countryside. Still following the river we went down a track to Stenkirth House and past a ruined Peel Tower. We had long-distance views to Nine Standards Rigg and nearer Murton Fell. Lunch was taken just before reaching Kirkby Stephen, where we spent an hour looking at the church and the High Street. We then headed back to the station, with views of Wild Board Fell, and took a detour to look at wonderful rock formations which had been carved by water underneath one of the many viaducts in the area. We then had a bit of a slog up the main road, passing the old station on our way.

The walk on *24 June* from Downham, again a lovely sunny day, attracted 12 people (it's good to see so many people enjoying the walks). After an initial hiccup with parking, we set off in a south-westerly direction past Longlands Wood and around Worsaw Hill, following Worston Beck to the pretty village of Worston. We then meandered across meadows passing Little Marley Hall (c 16th Century) - which had bay windows reputedly from Sawley Abbey. Then on the Angram Green with wonderful views of The Three Peaks, passing the interesting houses of Moorside, Barkerfield, Hookcliffe and Gerna, all in the shadow of Pendle Hill, and through fields to return to Downham, where refreshment was taken at the village Post Office.

*Don't forget the Planning Meeting on **17 July** at the Friends Meeting House.*

This will be followed by a Jacob's Join lunch.

Margaret Cullingworth

Thursday 19 June: Today's circular walk was in the lesser known (to this Yorkist at least) valley of the River Hodder below Dunsop Bridge. Commencing at Hodder Bank Farm the walk took us along the lower slopes of gentle Fair Oak Fell, through farms with such splendid names as Dinkling Green and Lickhurst, to the base of Knott Hill. The return, via Fair Oak and New Laund (skirting Whitewell), presented route-finding challenges from time to time to leaders Margaret and Michael Cullingworth, with what looked suspiciously like unauthorised footpath diversions by one or two local farmers and the lack of discernible pathways through a succession of lush meadow fields.

With the Hodder constantly in view as a silver ribbon running through the heavily wooded valley bottom, this was a very pleasant ramble of perhaps 8 miles with

an excellent turnout of 14 members.

John Jebson

Annual Coach Trip to The Theatre By the Lake, Keswick

Shirley Wolfenden and I have booked 30 tickets for the matinee of

Arsenic and Old Lace

for **Wednesday 15 October 2008.**

The total cost, including driver's tip will be £22.50.

Places will be booked on a first-come-first-served basis and the full amount is payable at the Coffee and Chat meeting on 14 August.

Janet Stafford

A little poem

The first day
When we took you to school for
the very first time
It was quite an emotional day.
Mum's eyes filled with tears,
(Your trembling lip!)
You wanted us to stay.
But as time went on
Your confidence grew
No more were you filled with dread.
That's how it should be, dear son
After all, you are The Head.

TRAMPS presents—

Thursday 10 July—Settle Victoria Hall at 7.30pm

Son of Man (12)

Saturday 6 September—Bentham Victoria Institute at 7.30pm

The Kite Runner (12)

For details of future programmes see our web-site—www.tramps.org.uk

A Trip on the Manchester Canal—2 July

On a warm sunny morning at 7 a.m. a coach party of U3A members travelled to Manchester where we boarded the "Snowdrop", a former ferry boat, for our journey along the Manchester Ship Canal to Liverpool. The canal was opened in 1894.

The boat sailed from Salford Quay, where the new lift bridge was raised to allow it to pass underneath. On board was a Blue Badge Guide, who gave a commentary on the canal and the surrounding area for the whole of the journey to Pier Head. Eventually his commentary fell upon "deaf" ears! We sailed on passing the modernist buildings of The Lowry and the Imperial War Museum North (Daniel Libeskind's creation) and Trafford Park. Then on past numerous swing bridges, Barton swing aqueduct and through four locks, learning many interesting details, not only of the canal but also of the villages and their history. The village of Daresbury was the home of Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, better known as Lewis Carroll. The village of Warburton has a timber framed church (St Werburgh) dating back to Tudor times.

After sailing through the built up areas of Widnes and Runcorn (with its famous bridge) we reached the Mersey Plain with its spectacular views and salt marshes, where rare-breed sheep and cattle grazed. This was in stark contrast to the sprawl at Ellesmere Port, with its industrial installations dealing with caustic soda, gas, oil and even cars to be scrapped. Passing through the last lock we emerged from the canal into the Mersey and were now able to espy the Wirral, with its many Victorian mansions and parkland, such as Eastham woods and Port Sunlight (not visible), created by Lord Leverhulme. The faded glory of Rock Ferry and Tranmere were plain to see. On the Liverpool side of the Mersey both cathedrals could be easily identified, as could the John Lennon Airport and the mansions of Garston. It was wonderful to see the transformation which is taking place along the waterfront, with parkland and housing (even the appearance of Toxteth is changing for the better). Arriving ahead of schedule we were taken further along the Mersey, past Birkenhead to Wallasey, eventually arriving at Pier Head, with the contrasting styles of buildings, both old and new.

We disembarked outside the Cunard and Royal Liver buildings. Regrettably we did not have time to spare for a look around Liverpool, so it was back to the coach for our journey home to Settle but not before driving past what were the famous Liverpool Docks, from where the great liners and cargo ships sailed on their journeys around the world. Only a few gateways and warehouses are left as a reminder of the once busy port. The weather was kind to us, which made for a most enjoyable day.

Thanks must go to Shirley and Janet for arranging this memorable day. **Michael Cullingworth**

Next month's Thursday meeting— 14 August

will be

***Coffee, chat, and an opportunity
to renew your membership for 2008-9
(but NB not to sign up for classes yet)***

Coffee from 10.00am for 10.30am in the The Victoria Hall.

Up close and personal

In this series we try to find out a bit about the life and background of one of our members.

This month the spotlight falls on our Secretary, **Gillian Walton**



Which U3A groups do you currently attend?

Are there any new groups you'd like to see (no commitment to lead them!)?

I go to Line Dancing and am a member of the Book Group and I intend to join Art Appreciation. I also run the Exercise Group and (with Pat Smith) Circle Dancing.

I'd like a World Affairs Discussion Group; and perhaps a DIY Group.

Where are your roots? I was born at 16 Marshfield Road, Settle. I went to university at 18 then, for a few years, lived near Manchester, then in Baildon before returning in 1980 to the area in which I was born.

What does your family consist of? My lovely husband Roger, 2 grown-up sons and 1 grown-up daughter. I have 1 remaining aunt and 1 special aunt-in-law, Barbara Middleton. I have a splendid assortment of cousins and some interesting in-laws.

Tell us briefly about your education and career:

I was educated at Settle Primary school, passed the 11+ and went to Settle Girls' High School,

which became a co-ed comprehensive when I was in the 6th form. That was the time when George Pattison, Alan King and other “mould-breakers” came as teachers and our perceptions of school changed dramatically! After that I went to Reading University where I read English, Latin and Philosophy for a BA (Hons), followed by Manchester University for a Certificate in Education. For a few years I taught in and around Manchester. Then I married my childhood sweetheart and for 10 years I was a full-time wife and mother. We moved to Baildon before coming back to the Settle area, which we found had changed, very much for the better, because of the influx of people “from away”. It was less parochial and more egalitarian. There was a Middle School, a swimming pool and you could buy yoghurt and pasta! After a short spell of supply teaching, I taught at Ingleton Primary School for 23 very happy years.

What do you regard as the highlight of your life so far, and what as your greatest achievement?

Highlight: Being able to buy Queen’s Rock House when we came back to the area.

Achievement: My family and home.

Have you any unachieved ambitions? Having accepted the fact that I shall never be waltzed around a Viennese ballroom floor wearing yards of tulle with thousands of sequins, I’ve settled for horticultural ambition: verdant vegetables, billowing borders and flourishing fruit.

Have you any hobbies? Yoga, gardening, reading, tennis, pottering about on my bicycle. Different kinds of dancing including circle and line dancing. I do Meals on Wheels and run exercise sessions for Age Concern.

What books are you currently reading? For the Book Group I’m re-reading “Tess of the D’Urbervilles” by Thomas Hardy. I always have a book of poetry close at hand so I’m reading Hardy’s poetry to complement “Tess”. I always have a copy of *The Garden*, the RHS journal, nearby.

If you were on TV’s “Grumpy Old Women”, what would be your biggest grumble?

Packaging! It’s wasteful, often misleading (a big box with tiny contents), and it creates litter. Much of it is totally *unnecessary*.

Select one of the world’s major problems from your own point of view, and say what you would recommend should be done about it: The unequal, unfair distribution of food, wealth, opportunities and resources. For example Africa—what a stain on our conscience.

We can approach it by raising the consciousness of everyone in the Western world and here’s where the media could do so much. They so often get bogged down with sex and violence but the minute they turn their attention to disasters such as the Tsunami and Dafur, the money floods in.

Also I applaud *Oxfam Unwrapped*: if you want to give a worthwhile present to someone who already has all they need, you can, for instance, give a goat to Africa in their name, or 100 school dinners, or pay to train a teacher. Training a teacher costs about the same as a meal out for us. An additional bonus is that these gifts require no packaging!

What is your wish for future generations? I’d like them to be able to live healthy, happy lives in a healthy, happy and fair world. I believe that, although the world is changing rapidly, human nature doesn’t change all that much. We still have the same feelings, aspirations and attitudes as the characters in Shakespeare’s plays.

Have you any advice for today’s school leavers? I wouldn’t give advice to a school leaver—what youngster with spirit heeds advice from an elder? At best they listen politely before doing their own thing.

So I would want to say: “Go and follow your dreams”. At the same time, I would endeavour to give them the strategies, confidence and security to try, perchance to fail, and then to try again.

If there’s one thing you’ve learned from life, what is it? When we’re born, it is as if fate deals us a hand of cards. Some people get a much better deal than others. But what really matters is how you play your cards. Some people brilliantly surmount a raw deal whilst others who look as if they have all the aces just squander them.

Copy date for next issue of Newsletter

*All copy for publication in the next issue needs to reach the editor
(Pam Servant, Brayshaw Cottage, 23 Duke Street, Settle) by*

Thursday 7 August

NB all copy received by e-mail will be acknowledged.

I'm at an age when my back goes out more than I do

Old age is when you feel you don't get out enough—and would rather stay in anyway.