

Newsletter

Issue No 5/12
September 2007

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE SETTLE DISTRICT

Registered Charity No 1095635
www.settledistrictu3a.org.uk
Contact: 01729 822313

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Dear Friends

The Editor has drawn my attention to the fact that most of the reports in this *Newsletter* are from the lighter groups. Our conclusion is that the more academic groups do not meet in the summer, hence the imbalance.

Always willing to stir things up a little, our President Frank Pedley has submitted a very interesting article for this edition: "U3A—Celebrate and Reflect". Do put pen to paper and reply to his points either way, and provoke a discussion for that "springboard" for the new committee to work on.

So we did celebrate our 5th and the National 25th Anniversaries, on Friday 31 August, with great fun. The venue was suitable, the food was excellent and the speaker, Maria Glot, was knowledgeable and entertaining on her subject "Titus Salt and the village of Saltaire". That is the feedback from the members I have met since. Look out in the *Newsletter* for a trip to Saltaire with a guided tour probable in November. Make sure your Railcard is up to date.

This is my last letter to you, as my term of office finished at the AGM. It has been a privilege to serve as Chairman this last two years and I have gained much by the experience, but it is time to let somebody else take us forward after such a successful first five years. My very best wishes for the future. I will still be around helping Shirley with the outings, attending various groups and leading the Strollers walking group.

Sincerely **Janet**

REMINDER—

KESWICK THEATRE TRIP

The bus will leave the Settle Cricket Club
at 8.30am on 17 October

TRAMPS presents—

Friday 21 September (Langcliffe Institute)

Saturday 22 September (Clapham Village Hall)

The Last King of Scotland

Friday 19 October (Langcliffe Institute)

Saturday 20 October (Clapham Village Hall)

Casino Royale

U3A—Celebrate and Reflect

from Settle District U3A President Frank Pedley

Anniversaries are, quite properly, times for celebration and reflection, and Settle District's first five years, coinciding with the first 25 years of the national body from which we sprang (the Third Age Trust) offers that unique opportunity. Simply to have passed the 200 mark of membership so soon, in a population catchment area of barely 5,000, is a real achievement, just as it is amazing that nationally the 8,000 members in 1986-7 when I was national chairman, have become over 180,000 and rising fast. It is certainly a great joy for me to see the Victoria Hall full at our monthly meetings and to witness the genuine camaraderie, which is so evident.

It will, therefore, no doubt seem somewhat churlish for me to set out the relatively minor misgivings I have at both local and national levels - though it is surely at times of prosperity that the tell-tale signs of weakness should be spotted in any organisation. We are, after all, an educational organisation, albeit rejecting the formalities of exams, inspections, and fixed meetings, which statutory bodies had to impose - indeed without this emphasis on education we would not be able to claim charitable status. Along with this informality, which was given full rein by the 1989 constitution, went the right to determine the way in which a local U3A was run, and there are, indeed, far more than the 57 varieties which we have passed on the way. So here are a few questions:

1 The fact that our tutors give their services free should mean that those who (even in a relatively well-off area like ours) have low incomes, can enjoy the benefits of U3A without worry or embarrassment. Do we always bear this in mind when considering our membership fees - and more specifically, do we think of it when groups decide on their own trips to various places? Should we warn potential members of a group that it may involve such expenditure? Put more bluntly, are we content to accept, or should we do all we can to rebut, the taunt that we are an irrevocably middle class organisation?

2 The cosier we are as an organisation, the more dangerous it is that cliques will form. Should we have a mechanism whereby groups "rejoin" each year, to ensure that they are open to others?

3 Do you, reading this, have a skill which you could pass on to other members, but which, so far has been hidden under a bushel? The educational content of our programme depends on making the maximum use of the talents we undoubtedly have and which, in the spirit of U3A, we should offer ("from each according to his ability...")

4 Do you, as a group member, give it the priority in your life timetable, which the work of the tutor deserves? I have been dismayed by the lack of commitment in some situations, which could, one might have thought, have been avoided. In particular, we seem to regard medical appointments as sacrosanct when, in most cases, a telephone call for an alternative time could solve the dilemma. Surely the pessimists of the 1980s were not right when they said that by not charging large fees for our groups, we would foster a lighthearted view of U3A and its message?

5 Do we accept, without qualification, that whilst rejecting the traditions of "the university" as most students know it, we nevertheless should expect that we should leave each session of our groups with a greater knowledge or understanding than we had before - as well as knowing each other better too?

None of these questions should be difficult to answer, but the response to them could offer the springboard which (experience shows) most local U3As need when the first tranche of members fades away and has to be replaced by men and women who may need a clearer incentive to join than we needed when we profited from the newness of it all.

But enough of that. Let's celebrate while we can, tell ourselves what fine people we are (for the most part anyway), and move on to the next phase.

Editor's note: If anyone wants to respond to Frank we shall be happy to print letters in the next issue.

Frank Pedley

Request to group leaders

Our web-site contains a page of information for each group. Could I ask Group Leaders to let me have information that they would like on their page and to keep updating it throughout the year. This can be sent to me via e-mail: fwdw@cmp.uea.ac.uk or by post to 8 Brook House Croft, Stainforth DB24 9QE. The pages can contain whatever information you would like, such as meeting agendas, brief reports of meetings, reading lists, links to relevant web sites, photographs etc. You might like to look at the pages of the Philosophy Group and the Walking Group as examples.

Frank Woodhams (Web-master)

FROM THE GROUPS CO-ORDINATOR

We now have 31 groups for you to choose from and sign up for; please ensure that you will be able to attend regularly before putting your name down. The smaller groups may have a waiting list—or we can start a second (or third!) group.

Watch out for changes since the programme was printed.

If you have missed the AGM (13 September), it is not too late, but you must come and let me know what you want to join.

Alison Tyas

(01729 822313) Quaker Garth, 21 Kirkgate, Settle (opposite the Victoria Hall)

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

Circle Dancing: starts again on **5 October**. New members are most welcome to join and enjoy a wide range of dances, old and new from many different countries. The steps are simple and the style is relaxed with the emphasis on enjoyment, not performance. Previous experience is not required, neither are partners.

Gillian Walton and Pat Smith

Exercise: We are continuing to keep fit and keep smiling at our weekly hour-long session. Till the end of September we meet at 10.00am on Fridays in the Victoria Hall; from **2 October** we change to 10.00am on *Tuesdays* and move to *the Cricket Club*. New members are always welcome: if you are not sure it's for you, then come for a "taster session".

Gillian Walton

Family History: The new session will start on Friday **26 October**. This is a self-help group and we would welcome suggestions for topics to be covered, visits, speakers etc. Please come along and tell us how your research is going. New members welcome.

Michael and Margaret Cullingworth

Listening to Music: For a peaceful, pleasant afternoon come to L to M at Smithy Croft, Rathmell on **17 September** at 2.00pm (directions from 840882). We enjoy a variety of pieces chosen by members. Newcomers very welcome. **Shirley Wolfenden**

Sunday Lunch: In August nine of us visited The Old Hall Inn at Threshfield, which was new to us and all pronounced themselves satisfied. The next gathering of the group will be on Sunday **16 September** when we will visit The Highwayman at Burrow, which is on the A683 turning on the Settle side of Kirkby Lonsdale. Please let me know by *Friday 14 September* if you are coming.

Audrey Daykin

Walking: The Thursday walks have already got under way and the Tuesday walks start on **11 September**. We look forward to seeing our regulars and anybody who would like to join; you will be most welcome. Programmes can be obtained from us and are

displayed in the TIC and the Library. **Michael and Margaret Cullingworth**

Wine Appreciation Group 1: Opinions varied about the first wine, a French rosé, Domaine Maurel, a Cabernet Sauvignon 2006, 13% at £3.99. Some found it harsh, while others liked it. There was general agreement about the Brown Brothers Dry Muscat, more of a gold than a white. This bottle was 2006, 13% at £4.99, with good body and flavour.

The Chilean Casa Lapostolle Cabernet Sauvignon from the Rapel Valley was voted the best wine of the evening—a medium red, 2004, 14.5% at £5.99, while the final wine, Poliziano Rosso di Montepulciano 2004, 13.5% at £8.99, was certainly a deep red but was not judged as living up to its promise or the 50% extra in price.

The group let out an involuntary and sympathetic gasp when a full glass of the deep red was accidentally sent flying over the centre of the hostess' plain cream carpet! Within seconds the able bodied were on their knees, a cry for "Carpet Spray Vanish" went up—and was met without delay. Five minutes later—the four-foot crimson streak was no more. Great relief all round—and Vanish was voted the best bottle of the evening!

GHP

Settle and District Aid in Sickness Fund

Registered Charity No 219094

We've been notified by Settle District U3A member

Arthur Lupton of an excellent service provided by this charity, which operates the Hospital Visiting Scheme. This provides transport to and from Airedale and other hospitals for those who would otherwise find it difficult or impossible to attend for appointments or to visit close friends or relations.

If you need transport, you can telephone Arthur (**01729 823987**) who will arrange for one of the twelve volunteer drivers to pick you up from home and take you to the hospital. The driver will wait at the hospital for up to an hour (or perhaps more by special arrangement in the case of an appointment, when it may not be possible to predict the time needed) and will then collect you and take you home.

For a return journey to Airedale the driver will charge you £6 (or a total of £10 if there are two or more passengers). You will also be asked to pay any parking fee. Of course the actual cost of the service is considerably more than this: the difference is made up by the charity, and the drivers give their time as a voluntary service.

The service also covers other hospitals (such as Bradford, Burnley, Harrogate, Lancaster and Leeds among others) and the cost is more or less in proportion to the different distances.

And here's where you may be able to help: Arthur is on the look-out for more drivers who could join the scheme—the hours can be arranged to suit your other commitments. If you think you could help, give him a ring to talk it over.

Up close and personal

In this series we try to find out a bit about the life and background of one of our members. Some of us of course have achieved great things, while others have led what may be regarded as a more everyday sort of life; this series is equally interested either way.

This month the spotlight falls on **Alan Hemsworth**

Which U3A groups do you currently attend? Are there any new groups you'd like to see (no commitment to lead them)?

Heraldry, Looking at Old Buildings, Walking (when possible). Next session I may also join Digital Photography and Listening to Music. I'd like to see a Practical Art class.

Where are your roots?

I was born in Pudsey. After marriage I lived in Leeds and Wakefield before coming to Settle in 1984.

What does your family consist of? My wife Dorothy, two married daughters,

1 granddaughter and 2 grandsons.

Tell us briefly about your education and career:

Educated at Pudsey Grammar School. My early employment was with British Rail (interrupted by National Service in the RAF), but the major part of my working life was in the book trade—bookselling and then publishing, working for Thames & Hudson and the British Museum. I later worked with Bill Mitchell on a freelance basis for ten years.

Music has been an all-consuming passion. Starting with piano lessons at 7, then accompanying and singing with various choirs in Leeds and Wakefield, my arrival in Settle signalled a new era. I was a founder member, rehearsal accompanist, publicity rep and first chairman of Langcliffe Singers and a member of Craven Camerata. I eventually defected to the Early Music scene and in 1990 started and directed my own *a capella* group—The Nonsuch Singers. Although officially retiring the group in 2004, we still provide the music at the traditional Christmas festivity at The Folly.

I currently sing with and conduct the Staincliffe Singers—a group specialising in recreating church services of the 16th and 17th Centuries.

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

One has to be the invitation 5 years ago to take my choir to provide the music for a service at Ripon Cathedral. And in 1995 Slaidburn Parish Church asked me to organise and perform the music to cover the whole period of their history when they celebrated their 750th



anniversary. This was repeated in 1996 for their 751st!
Then, celebrating our Golden Wedding anniversary in June.

Have you any unachieved ambitions? To be able to fold an OS map up properly at the first attempt!

Have you any hobbies?

I'm listed in a Directory of Speakers (I have 5 different talks) and speak on average 4 times a month mainly in West and North Yorkshire addressing Women's Institutes, Mens Fora, Probus, Local and Family History Societies and U3As (including Settle in 2006).

For 35 years I've been researching the English history portrayed in nursery rhymes and have finally been persuaded to produce a book; it's a slow job because I easily go off at tangents (I'm a typical Gemini).

Groups/Societies I'm involved with are Settle Mens Forum, The Folly, North Craven Heritage Trust, Giggleswick Horticultural Society, the Yorkshire Dales Society and North West Early Music.

If you were on TV's "Grumpy Old Men", what would be your biggest grumble?

I'm driven to distraction by the overloud, irritating and tuneless drivel (usually accompanied by frenzied drumming) that passes for background music in what could otherwise be worthwhile TV documentaries.

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:

I go along with our Vice-Chairman's remarks about energy, made in the July issue. Secondly, the scourge of binge drinking and associated lawlessness worries me as a grandparent. If the Government would be as tough on this as they were on smoking there might be some hope.

What is your wish for your grandchildren? Good health.

Have you any advice for today's school leavers? Pass!

If there's one thing you've learned from life, what is it? I'm still wondering!

Thursday meetings—Lecture programme for 2007-8

Some membership cards for next session had to be printed before the new programme was complete: the July speaker had not been fixed.

This has now been finalised, and the speaker will be Tony Stephens, talking on "*Singing for my supper: five years in the life of a Westminster Abbey chorister*".

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—e-mail <mailto:mpms@daelnet.co.uk>)
by **Thursday 27 September 2007**.

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

STOP PRESS

This space is for any urgent items that come too late for the copy date (see below). Please keep wording to a minimum.

Great Lives: We will resume on **17 October** at 10.30am. Elgar will be our main concern.

Frank Pedley

The last **Strollers Walk** for this year will be on **Wednesday 10 October**. We plan to take the 10.27am bus to Skipton and walk along the canal to the Bay Horse Inn at Snaygyll for lunch. Please contact me if you wish to come as I need to phone to give an idea of numbers.

Janet Stafford (825449)

You know you're getting old when you try to straighten out the wrinkles in your socks, and find you're not wearing any.

I've got to the age when I need my false teeth and my hearing aid before I can ask where I've left my glasses.

Our Anniversaries celebration 31st August 2007



Our Chairman with our guest speaker,
Maria Glot

