



newsletter

November

Welcome to this month's edition of News in the Third Age.

I have had the pleasure of meeting many of you across the country this month, including at the second volunteer training day in Northern Ireland, and in Scotland. I look forward to seeing many more of you in future months.

You may be interested to know that the latest edition of the [Charity Commission News](#) is now available, providing essential information for charity trustees and their advisers.

Please keep sending all your news, stories and significant events our Communications officer, Elizabeth – you can [contact her](#) at the National Office.

With very best wishes,

Sam Mauger
Chief Executive

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EGM

Each U3A will be invited to send representatives to the EGM (extraordinary general meeting) taking place on 21 March 2018 at the University of Birmingham's Great Hall. This is an important opportunity for U3As to vote on the proposed changes, following a year-long consultation with members. The EGM will be live-streamed to give those U3As that cannot attend in person the opportunity watch the proceedings. More details on the EGM will be sent out soon.

GDPR: General Data Protection Regulation

As I'm sure many of you know, General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) becomes law on May 25 next year, replacing the previous 1995 data protection directive which current UK law is based upon. To help U3As understand and implement the changes we will be providing support and guidance.

Welcome

We are delighted that Sophie Wellings has joined the National Office as our first Advice and Volunteering Manager. Sophie has many years' experience of working with and supporting volunteers in both local and national charities. Sophie will be supporting all our wonderful U3A volunteers and helping to set up a programme of training workshops.

Advice and U3A Support Assistant Sharon Ahtuam reached a landmark of 25 years working for the U3A movement, which now has 20 times more members than when she began.

Lifelong learning



An Index of the Rare

Deeside & Wirral U3A member and Network Chair, Arthur Maltby put his past profession as a indexer and archiver to good use, by researching and setting up an index of all the unusual U3A interest groups from around the country.

The Index of The Rare covers subjects offered by less than 20 U3As which are unusual and cross references each U3A. So not Art, but ' Art as Therapy'. Not French but languages like Turkish or Danish. Subjects include Sex in Ancient Times, Bolsheviks, Fungi, Zulu War Studies, Walking Netball and Writing Limericks.

Arthur said "This came about from my love of 'organizing' knowledge plus a zest for U3A networking" The Index of the Rare will be available on the national U3A website in the coming months, but you can [find out more now](#).



Grave Research

Stapleford and District U3A has pioneered a local history research project documenting the names and personal details of every grave in the old part of the town's Cemetery. The Shared Learning Project involved around 18 U3A members who spent five months this year transcribing every detail of the headstones in the cemetery which dates back to 1884. This included using different research techniques to fill in the missing details which had been weathered away over time. It is planned to make the document available on the internet, spreadsheet, a booklet and to the local Studies library, Archive office, History Society and University.

Stapleford U3A member Janet Cross said, "Over 560 headstones were transcribed with 1100 individual names. It felt a real honour to be given a window into the lives of those people buried there. We would encourage other U3As to do something similar as it provides a service to our local community and beyond." [Read more on the U3A website.](#)

Locating the Lost Histories of London and the West Midlands

There is still time to get involved in this collaborative research project, exploring the 17th century Hearth Tax. Three U3As (from City of London, South East London and the West Midlands) are exploring the everyday lives of residents in small well-documented communities through the Hearth Tax and other sources. The aim of this Shared Learning Project is to find out as much as possible about the people who lived and worked in these areas, and to reconstruct the nature of these contrasting communities from a variety of angles.

Training will be provided at Birmingham and Roehampton Universities in palaeography, hearth tax studies and local history. The Institute of Historical Research will publish the work. For further information and to apply, [download the flyer.](#)

Please note that Jennifer Simpson has taken over as the **National Shared Learning Project (SLP) Co-ordinator**. Thank you to Jennifer Anning for her tireless work promoting SLPs across the U3A movement. Jennifer Anning is not leaving the SLP scene entirely and will continue to manage the Royal Holloway Citizens 800 project and also be involved with projects locally in South West London. For Shared Learning Project enquiries you can contact Jennifer Simpson on jennifer.simpson176@gmail.com.

Educational resources

New subject advisers

We are delighted to welcome five new subject advisers this month:

[Ballroom Dancing](#) - Gill and Greg Greenhalgh

[Memory](#) - Arthur Maltby

[Mindfulness and Meditation](#) - Nancy Taylor

[Tai Chi & Qi Gong](#) - Pat Ryan

[Yoga](#) - Peter Burton

Visit u3a.org.uk/resources/subjects for the full list.

Online courses

To coincide with the centenary of votes for women next year, Royal Holloway, University of London, and the UK Parliament are launching a free online course on FutureLearn in February 2018.

[Beyond the Ballot](#) explores the history of women's rights in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and the campaign for the vote from the first mass petition calling for women's suffrage in 1866 to the 1918 Representation of the People and 1928 Equal Franchise Acts.

While individual learners are expected to complete the course in three weeks, Royal Holloway is offering U3As who would like to use the course as a group learning exercise a free upgrade (worth £39). This will enable U3A groups to access the course and its materials for an unlimited

period. There are a limited number of upgrades available so please register your U3A for an upgrade as soon as possible by [contacting the National Office](#).

New releases this month include two new Language MOOCs by Len Gibbs, in Italian and Spanish, available from the [Resource Centre](#).

Events



1,000 Years of Illumination

Over 200 U3A members from around the country attended an exclusive U3A day of lectures on Western European Illuminated Manuscripts at The British Library which holds one of the finest collections in the world. U3A members had the opportunity to hear from leading experts in the field of Illuminated Manuscripts including from scribe and illuminator, Patricia Lovett MBE.

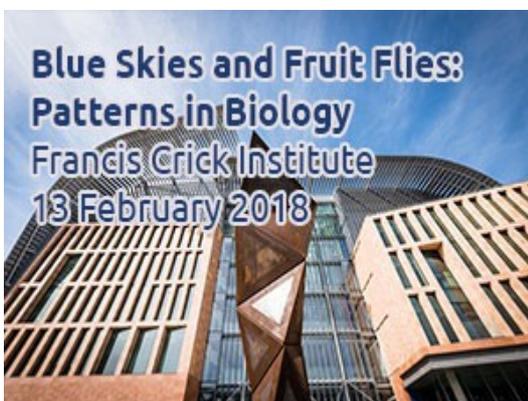
Learning Events Officer Julie Travers said "This was a very special event. Our members were able to learn more about some of the finest examples of Illuminated Manuscripts in the world and ask questions of experts from leading institutions including The Courtauld Institute of Art,

Sotheby's and of course the British Library". [Read more on the U3A website.](#)

The **Essex Association of U3As**, which encompasses 56 U3As from across the county, has held a Study Day at Plume School in Maldon. Nearly 200 members studied 25 different subjects ranging from Art to Philosophy - led by over 15 volunteer tutors who are U3A members.

Essex Association Chairman Chris Bellamy said, "This event went entirely to the heart of what U3A does – learning in a sociable way and the chance to meet other U3As. I was a participant on the day – learning more about railways, from 1825 up to the modern day. It was an opportunity to learn more about a subject you are interested in in greater depth. The standard of learning was very high with members learning new things in a really enjoyable. Thank you to all those who took part and especially to our wonderful U3A tutors".

Forthcoming events



Click the images to book, or visit u3a.org.uk/events.

News from U3As

The total number of U3As around the country has risen to 1,018 after a group of five U3As achieved full membership status in the last few months.

[Kings Norton](#) (West Midlands), [Sutton Bridge](#) (East Midlands) [Whitworth & District](#) (North West) Hythe & Dibden (South East) Shoebury and Thorpe Bay (East of England) have all become full members of the U3A national body – the Third Age Trust – who support and facilitate all the U3As in the UK.

There are many more U3As being set up all the time which include three in Scotland (Glasgow West End, Paisley and Brechin) who are close to achieving their full status.

London U3A took part in filming of a new documentary with South Korean TV. The crew met U3A members taking part in Country Dancing, Recorder Playing and Bridge. They also interviewed members and coordinators of both the Country Dancing and Recorder groups and filmed the London U3A Chairman, Naomi Stuart. It will be broadcast next month. Meanwhile, see the photos on our [Facebook page](#).

Forth Valley U3A's award winning Cultural Activities in Care Homes (CACH) project has achieved another award – this time for the Outstanding Achievement in Health and Wellbeing at the Stirlingshire Voluntary Enterprise (SVE) Inspiring Volunteer Award Ceremony 2017.

Launched in 2008, members of the CACH project work with local care homes to arrange events to enhance the quality of residents' lives and encourage their inclusion in meaningful activities. The project offers a range of cultural and leisure opportunities to residents and includes performances by local musicians and school children; reminiscence sessions with small groups and life story work with individuals.

Chair of CACH Project, Susan Tester said, " We were delighted to receive this award. We know that the care home residents and staff appreciate our contribution but it is always great to receive outside recognition for the hard work of the CACH team". [Read more on the U3A website.](#)



Lichfield U3A has had two high profile speakers in the last couple of months. Jerry Bostick who worked for NASA for more than 20 years during the most prestigious and exciting time for space travel came over from Texas to give a talk to over 60 U3A members on his exciting career. Now in his nineties, Jerry's talk included details of the pre-digital age which amazingly produced some of the most successful space missions ever seen. He told an amusing tale of a wasted opportunity, when his young son had turned away a visitor to their house. It turned out to be a certain Neil Armstrong. The visit was covered by local newspaper, Lichfield Mercury. [Read more on our Facebook page.](#)

Scarborough U3A is for the second year running exhibiting its art at the Scarborough Art Gallery Community Room between October 31st and November 26th 2017. Scarborough U3A currently offers seven Art Groups that teach and support drawing and painting. Those groups, along with the Ceramics Group and the Stained Glass Crafting Group are showcasing a wide range of skill and experience achieved with the support and guidance of their volunteer group leaders. Scarborough U3A hope as many people will be able to come and enjoy the exhibition.

Northern Ireland Region held its Autumn Meeting at the Grosvenor House in Belfast, with special guests including National Office Chief Executive Sam Mauger and the Commissioner for Older People for Northern Ireland, Eddie Lynch. The next day **North Down and Ards U3A** celebrated their 20th anniversary with a gala dinner.

Landmark Anniversaries

Well done to all our U3As – and there were many – who celebrated landmark anniversaries this month. These included **Fetcham U3A** who celebrated their 15th anniversary, and **Croydon U3A**, founded in 1987, who marked their 30th milestone with a number of special events and an anniversary tea party with celebratory themed cakes.

U3As in the news

off the press – many of our U3As continue to achieve wonderful local press. A sample from this month includes Kath Bottwood, Treasurer of **Northants U3A**, who was interviewed on the Helen Blaby show on BBC Radio Northamptonshire – [listen again on the BBC Radio iPlayer](#).

Cirencester U3A's Radio Group broadcast a monthly show on Corinium Radio. This programme was originally broadcast by Corinium Radio in October – [listen to it on Mixcloud](#).

Elsewhere, U3A coverage included [Cowbridge U3A in the Llantwit Major](#) and [Ilkley U3A in the Ilkley Gazette](#).

Do continue to let National Office know of any of your press coverage, as we would love to share your news.

News from the NEC

U3A Trustee for Wales, Hilary Jones is Chairman of **U3APlus** – a new initiative which aims to offer support and advice to ensure members and potential members with impairments and disabilities are able to access and contribute to their U3As.

Hilary said, "Raising awareness of these different challenges and offering practical solutions is vital to ensure that U3As can support everyone in enjoying their membership. This is advice for all levels of U3A; for members with an impairment so they can feel confident to ask for assistance when needed and for U3As to have the best advice so that they in turn can give constructive and positive support. U3APlus will be developing over the coming months including a new website and we will keep U3As informed as it happens"

Surrey U3A Network held a development day entitled 'Keeping Everyone Welcome'. Chairman Doreen Raine said, "It was well supported by U3As and aimed to highlight the potential challenges faced by U3A members with disabilities or impairments which could affect their ability to access all the informal learning and activities in their U3As. The day included speakers who were experts in their fields and a group discussion on Implementing Inclusiveness".

Other news

The Great British Bake Off

Applications for The Great British Bake Off Series 9 are now open and any avid U3A bakers are invited to apply. The TV team are looking for the UK's best home bakers to enter the tent. If you are interested visit: www.applyforbakeoff.co.uk or call 0207 067 4837 for more information. And if you're successful – don't forget to let National Office know how it is going!

Digital skills in Scotland

Voluntary Arts Scotland are running free Digital Skills workshop for members of U3A and there are still spaces available in [Selkirk on the 25 November](#).

The Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) are offering free training to Digital Champions to help others in their organisations and communities to get to grips with the digital world. If you are interested, please [visit their website](#) for more information and a link to register your interest. The SCVO is particularly keen to get the U3A movement involved in this programme.



Max Edwards - Sutton U3A

"I came to England from Sri Lanka in 1975 to complete nurse training within the field of Learning Disability. I achieved a Level 2 in British Sign Language. Now I am 64, I still work part time but after an interesting and varied 35 years within the NHS I retired. The NHS Retirement Programme encouraged me to explore U3A. And it is one of the best things I have done.

"I believe in lifelong learning, meeting new people and taking on new challenges. At Sutton U3A, I lead one of the Art Groups as Art was always something I enjoyed but didn't have the time to do.

"I would recommend being a member of U3A especially as retirement can mean your friendship circle reduces but now I am making friends and am keeping my brain

active. I hope to get even more involved once I finally am fully retired!

Did somebody forward this email to you?

Sign up at u3a.org.uk/email and we will send the next issue to you directly.

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