

## **EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT OFFICER'S REPORT FOR 2011-2012**

Planning has been carried out by a committee consisting of officers of the RRC and members from all Counties. In November we set out plans for the year plus working toward a rolling three year plan. The next meeting was a successful telephone conference meeting, the first for the region.

In March 2012 a 'Memory Workshop' was presented by Aughton & Ormskirk U3A. This group who had been researching well being in the third age and realised that the fear of and actual memory loss as we grow older, was a major cause of lack of well-being. They have developed courses that in certain cases can prevent or delay memory loss. Participants responded enthusiastically and declared interest in starting courses themselves in their own U3As. The Region agreed to help where it could and Lynne Cox was appointed Regional Co-ordinator. Leicestershire have already begun developing the courses whilst Lincolnshire, on July 14<sup>th</sup>, are holding a seminar to develop them in their county. The way that U3As have responded to this facet of ageing in a positive way is in sharp contrast to the negative comments of, for example, John Simpson the BBC correspondent.

On 18<sup>th</sup> April we held a workshop for committee members concentrating on the positions of Chairmen, Secretaries and Groups Co-ordinators. This was well attended and was well received: the vast majority of members said it was either very good or good. We will offer another Workshop for Committee Members next year and try to dovetail with Network intentions.

On 23<sup>rd</sup> May Liz Wilson organised a 'Creative Writing' workshop, which again was highly successful.

It is planned to hold a Regional Musical Festival to celebrate thirty years of the U3A hopefully in the Autumn but may be in the Spring next year.

All three workshops this year were held at Notts County Football Club, Nottingham. We will continue to look at alternative venues but cost, availability and 'centrality' remain important issues.

I have enjoyed this year as your EDO. I would have enjoyed another year but for health reasons and with responsibility for a relative's care I have decided to take a sabbatical. I am confident the East Midlands will continue to progress and I hope to be part of it.

Joe White (June 2012)