

The

EAST MIDLANDS

Issue 1

at the HEART  of it all!

U3A ACROSS THE AGES!

Derby's 25th Birthday Party



The 25th Anniversary of the founding of the Derby U3A was celebrated at the Friends Meeting House on 17 June 2010, with a bring and share lunch followed by an excellent performance of highlights from "The Gondoliers", given by members of the Matlock Gilbert and Sullivan Society. A large celebratory iced cake had been ordered and was duly delivered on an impressive looking silver stand. The cake was cut by two of the original founder members of Derby U3A, Joyce Allman and Beryl Beard, both of whom are still Group tutors, together with assistance from Vera Fowler, another long standing member. Everyone present enjoyed a slice of cake with their tea or coffee, with plenty left over to save for members unable to be present.

Derby U3A began life in early 1985, thanks to the inspiration and hard work of the late Margaret Johnson, a retired local headmistress. Meetings were held fortnightly in the Friends Meeting House, the location we still use today for many of our activities. Talks and visits were arranged and by the time of the first AGM in February 1986 there were 34 members and 3 groups – Arts and Music, Conversational German and Computing.

Higham and Rushden's 1st Birthday Party

What a first birthday party! Twenty-nine groups displayed their activities, we were entertained by the Country Dancing Group showing their unbounded energy and skill with two dances, the Singing Group with an excellent choice of music which we all hummed for the rest of the day and the Play Reading Group giving us a taste of drama.

Our two Mayors were present for the whole afternoon, Councillor Val Newbury from Higham Ferrers and Councillor Carol Childs from Rushden, both of whom toured all the stands making wistful comments about joining the U3A when their tour of public duty is complete and they have more time. Both they and Margaret Elgood, Chair of Wellingborough U3A, who helped our U3A get off the ground, joined in the first anniversary cake cutting. Liz Wilson, the U3A East Midlands Regional Trustee also joined us for the afternoon. During the afternoon, 183 people took part in the activities of which 157 were members. Seven more people joined the Branch making a total membership of 305, which must be a record for any organisation in its first year.



COMMITTEE UPDATE

Who We Are!

Chairman:	Christine Baxter (Notts)
Treasurer:	Bob Carter (Leics)
Secretary:	Margaret Potter (Leics)
Derbyshire:	Peter Golding (Retires 2011) Roger Watt (Retires 2012) David Pinney (Alternate)
Leicestershire:	Richard Burdon (retires 2011) David Kyle (Retires 2012) Helen Davison (Alternate)
Lincolnshire:	Joe White (Retires 2011) John Down (Temp) Vacant (Alternate)
Northamptonshire:	Denise Rowe (Retires 2011) Pat Reeve (Retires 2012) Vacant (Alternate)
Nottinghamshire:	Roger Bennett (Retires 2011) Jeremy Lloyd (Retires 2012) Sylvia Slack (Alternate)
Ex Officio:	National Trustee – Liz Wilson (retires 2012) EDC – Alan Morris

Future Plans

An AGM Sub Committee is planning: -----

AGM 2011

Date: Tuesday 26th July

Venue: Loughborough University

Theme: Healthy Ageing

Speakers: To be confirmed

(Possibles are Alex McMinn (TAT Research Committee), a Research Lecturer from Loughborough University, John Hayes, Minister of State for Further Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning (South Holland and The Deepings)

An Action Sub Committee is planning: -

- **A Regional Newsletter (Liz Wilson)**
- **A Study Day- Date = Spring 2011 /Venue = to be confirmed /Theme = Celebrating Our Cultures / Subjects = Leather Industry representing Northamptonshire and Leicestershire, Peak District representing Derbyshire, Engineering representing Lincolnshire, Byron representing Nottinghamshire (All)**
- **2 Day Residential Study Days possibly at Northampton University (All)**
- **Group Meetings for a) Committee Members re Current issues: Increasing Membership, Finding Group Leaders, Communication, Disseminating Information, Finding Committee Members. (Full Day = Alan Morris)**
 - b) **Group Leaders of Minority Interest Groups (Half Day = Alan Morris)**
 - c) **Committee Post Mentors (Half Day = Alan Morris & Liz Wilson)**
 - d) **Interest Group Leader Meetings (Half Day = Liz Wilson & Reps Counties)**
- **“Regional Policy for Supporting Group Leaders” (Alan Morris)**

EDGE TO EDGE

(EVENTS ACROSS THE REGION)

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

Boating at Brixworth

The August meeting was held again this year at the Northampton Sailing Club at Pitsford Reservoir and it once again proved to be a popular venue with over fifty members attending. Liz Wilson, who is a Regional Trustee of the East Midlands Group of U3A branches, also joined us. Members had the opportunity to be taken out on the Sailability (sailing for the disabled) sailing boat and this was followed by an excellent buffet lunch, taken on the veranda as the sun had finally decided to shine. The proceeds of the raffle together with individual donations from members were contributed to the Sailability project. After lunch members enjoyed a presentation on the history of the country park and the role of the County Council in providing this and similar facilities around the county before the day was finished off by afternoon tea. This event is proving so popular that it could become an annual fixture in the diary.



Previously, at our meetings held in the Village Hall on the first Wednesday of the month at 2 p.m., we have had presentations on Humour Therapy and The Story of a Country House (Althorp). Presentations over the next three months will include The Effects of Alcohol, a Very Interesting Grandmother, and Northants History in Stained Glass. The established interest groups continue to flourish and the new Gardening Group is proving very popular having arranged several visits to local gardens. The newly formed Poetry Group is now meeting on a regular basis and we hope to form a Table Tennis Group in the near future as a sufficient level of interest has been shown. Members are also looking into the possibility of forming a Dance Group and a Debating Group but these ideas are still in the early stages.



We supported the Brixworth Carnival this year by entering a float decorated by the members, mainly the Art Group, and also provided a cake stall, which was very successful in raising a contribution to the supported charities. The event proved very popular and we shall no doubt support this next time it is held.

The Travel Group went to Italy and although this was a small group they all enjoyed the trip immensely and are looking forward to planning next years trip. As usual in July, the Lunch Group had an evening meeting held at The Red Lion, East Haddon to include spouses who may not be members of the group and the September meeting is to be at The Spencer Arms. The Rambling Group has held successful walks at Little Brington, Great Addington, and Great Oxendon, as usual meeting at the local pub for coffee and returning for lunch. Future walks are planned for Yardley Hastings and Gumley.

Membership of the group seems to have stabilised at just over a hundred but new members are more than welcome. The Membership Secretary, Peter Davies can be contacted on 880401.

Gerry Dobson

EDGE TO EDGE

DERBYSHIRE



Writing at the William

The photo is of our host and hostess at the King William where we held the workshop.

Before Christmas each member of the writing group wrote a piece about the season. They were made into a booklet and sold to other members. With the £20 left we invited Derby writing group to join us in a workshop lead by Steve Wetton who is a scriptwriter for the BBC. Since then we have had to start a second group

Ann Martin Belper and Serby U3A

Maundy Money at Derby Cathedral.

Two Derby U3A members were nominated to be among those receiving the gift of Maundy money from the Queen at the centuries old ceremony when she visited Derby Cathedral on 1 April 2010. Gerald Hurst, for his long service to the Cathedral and Enid Measures for services to her local Baptist Church were amongst the 84 men and 84 women who were honoured by the Queen at this event. Members of Derby U3A have had the privilege of examining at first hand the actual coins, which had been presented to their proud recipients, and learning something about the actual ceremony and its history.



Dennis Jowle Chairman Derby U3A

Elvaston Castle Joint Picnic for Long Eaton U3A & Derby U3A

The previous wet day and a wet morning discouraged numerous members from attending our joint picnic. However thirteen members turned out and had a lovely time. We sat under shelter in the courtyard enjoying our lunches and meeting new friends. We then had opportunities to visit the cafe, the shop and the beautiful grounds. Everywhere looked superb. The sun came out and enabled some of us to stroll round the wonderful Old English walled garden. A bonus was a guided visit to the nearby Parish Church, which is over 700 years old. We explored the church and heard all about aspects of its history. Many thanks to all who took part in this our first joint event with another U3A.



David Pinney Long Eaton and District U3A

EDGE TO EDGE

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

Nottingham Castle Area Walk

As we moved down Castle Road we saw the next blot on the landscape, People's College, again built in the 1960s and resulting in the destruction of many old properties. We now reached the Trip to Jerusalem Inn, which has a date plaque of 1189, but Margaret assured us that it was built much later than this. We passed the Brewhouse Museum to reach the area at the foot of the Castle Rock to look at the numerous caves dug into the rock, which were used as early dwellings by the Snots of 'Snottingham.' At one time the River Leen flowed in front of the Castle Rock. Making our way back up Castle Road we saw some beautiful buildings on the right hand side designed by Watson Fothergill. These are now trendy bars and many of us looked at them longingly, but we were whisked past! We went up a flight of steps to Standard Hill where Charles I raised his standard at the beginning of the Civil War. It is sad that such an important event is only commemorated by a plaque on an adjacent wall and an inscription on a plaque in the road. Visiting tourists, or indeed residents of Nottingham, would have no idea that such a monumental event had taken place here.



We passed through the soulless blocks of flats built on the site of the old hospital and walked along Park Terrace. At its junction with Newcastle Drive is number 19 Park Terrace built by T C Hind in 1881 and which is perched precariously on the edge of Park Tunnel. This Tunnel was completed in 1855 and gave access from the Park residential development to Derby Road. However with a gradient of 1 in 12 it is unlikely that any carriages used the Tunnel. The pedestrian entrance to the Tunnel is via a spiral stone staircase of 96 steps from the top of College Street. Earlier Margaret had told us that many ladies who tried to end it all by jumping off the Castle Rock had landed safely thanks to their voluminous skirts acting as parachutes! We thought it would be interesting to put this to the test and persuade one of our lady members to jump from the top of the steps and record it on our new digital camera. Yes, you've guessed, she declined!!

Finally we made our way up the Tunnel to Derby Road, past St Barnabas R C Cathedral, from where it was a sprint finish by some to the watering hole adjacent to the Playhouse. We sat in the glorious sunshine chatting about our most interesting tour. **John Doar** Sherwood U3A



In Action at Thorsby Hall, a Warner holiday.



REP'S REPORT

I had intended to give a brief synopsis of my report about matters discussed and decisions made at NEC meetings but, as each U3A's representative receives a copy via the Network Contact, for discussion at Network Meetings, I was persuaded to do a 'Out and About' Report as I did for the Regional AGM.

National

- Attended 3 NEC Meetings
- Sorry but I missed the **SCE Meeting** because I was on holiday, in Somerset with my own and other local U3As
- Attended the **AGM** and was a Car Park Attendant, meeting, greeting and directing weary travellers who wended their way to Cirencester. Good to see a few familiar faces from our Region but hope to see lots more next year when it come to the **East Midland's Conference Centre 2011**.
- I was a member of the small team which produced the **Survey** which I hope you will use to express your ideas about current services provided by TAT and what is needed for future development.
- I have also followed up my review of the **TAT website** with, hopefully productive meetings at Bromley. We concentrated on the Public Domain, as opinion suggested that a pile of books and pages and pages of writing were not reflective of U3As. Obviously money and time were crucial factors to be considered but, hopefully, by Christmas, it will show the varied world of the U3As with lots of photographs, much as does the booklet "**This is U3A**". Plus, when we have a **promotional DVD** that will also be there.

Regional

- Attended a Regional Committee Meeting and 3 Development sub-committee meetings.

Networks

Derbyshire

- Attended **the Derby Network Meeting**, which was a very splendid affair as it was held in the Council Chambers **at Long Eaton Town Hall**.
- Visited **Chesterfield U3A** at its meeting in the Winding Wheel Theatre – another splendid and amazing affair.
- Was a guest at **Derby's 25th Birthday** and heard from two of the founders how it all began. Loved the bit about the interest groups! At first all members were members of all the groups; so if the rambling group were rambling everyone rambled, if the craft group were knitting, everyone, if the knitted! There was an amazing fuddle, which I not only enjoyed helping to serve but also helping to eat.



Leicestershire

- Worked with the EDC, Margaret Potter, to get **Ashby-De-Le-Zouche** started and to help **Blaby**.
- Attended a Council Cluster Meeting in **Lutterworth** to find out about available funding.
- Participated in the new style **Network Meeting**.

Lincolnshire

- Dined on Lincolnshire sausage, learnt about the growth and demise of Lincolnshire airfields and was given a lovely Lincolnshire welcome at **Woodhall Spa**.
- Witnessed the amazing group leaders' workshop at **Bourne**.
- Attended the **Network Meeting** and heard a fantastic presentation on "Applications for Funding Awards" by Dick Newman

Northamptonshire

- Donned a life jacket and sailed off (not quite into the sunset but certainly a few times round the reservoir) and returned safely for a delicious lunch and Afternoon Cream Tea. with a talk about local Nature Reserves from one of the Rangers. Wonderful to chat and find that several members of **Brixworth U3A** had links with the Mansfield area.
- Together with the Northamptonshire Steering Group, I had a fascinating and illuminating tour of the Park Campus of **Northampton University** and a brief resume of activities from a member of each school. Avenue Campus Tour planned.
- Attended the **Network Meeting** at the historic Tithe Barn in Wellingborough.

Nottinghamshire

- Attended the ever lively and productive **Network Meeting**
- Have worked with **Dukeries U3A** to produce a 5 month publicity campaign to increase their numbers and begun implementation.
- Have continued to work with Sherwood, **my own U3A**, not only taking the Rambling and Drama Groups, but also designing our new website and spending the £10,000 obtained in grants (No problem there!!!)

EDGE TO EDGE

LINCOLNSHIRE

Lincolnshire

Lead the Way →

**Wow! What a workshop!
There was certainly nothing
corny about the exchanges
between group leaders at the
Corn Exchange in Bourne.**

South Lincolnshire Neighbourhood Group (SLiNG as one member affectionately termed it) is the joint link for various U3As: Bourne, The Deepings, Grantham, Sleaford, Spalding, Stamford and Welland.

On the 6th October, they invited Group Leaders from all Lincolnshire U3As to attend a Workshop and **over 100** came and took part in the activities. The day had 3 main aims:

1. To enable participants to discuss matters of mutual interest with colleagues having the same role.
2. To help participants learn from each other.
3. To help participants in their role in their U3A.

After an introduction by Ken Cater, participants were allocated to various “like subject” groups. For example the Reading/Writing/ Discussion Group was comprised of Leaders for Creative Writing/Detection in Crime/Discussion/Film Appreciation/Film, TV and Radio Discussion/Laughter Lines/Literature/Poetry/Play reading/Wills, Dicks and Harrys /Writing for Pleasure.

Each group had a large sheet with a “What Works Well?” column one side and an “Even Better If” adjoining it. Each group also had a sheet with questions, some pertinent to their group and some common across groups. For example the above group had: How do you include new members? Is there a level that the group reaches that would make taking in new members difficult? What decides the size of the group? If the group gets too big how do you split it? How do you encourage new group leaders? Do you divide duties? How do you select books/subjects?

Each group had a facilitator who noted Key Points, which were then announced to all, in summarised form by Bob Cawson. Feedback forms asked for evaluation against the aims and had the crucial question: “**How do you consider we could most profitably carry things forward?**” Alan Morris is going to summarise the responses. and he made the formal closing remarks.

However, for me, the remark I heard on the way out summed up the 2 hours experience. “**That’s given me insight, inspiration and ideas for new initiatives**”. Would that all meetings were so worthwhile!

Report by Liz Wilson.



What Works Well?



This Worked Well!

EDGE TO EDGE

LEICESTERSHIRE



Ashby is Amazing!

Yes there was a good turnout as Ashby people flocked to the introductory Meeting of the New Ashby U3A on the 29th June.

The atmosphere was buzzing with enthusiasm and high expectation as the audience was addressed by Margaret Potter, Educational and Development Contact for Leicestershire, David Kyle, Treasurer of Leicester U3A, Mike Long, the National Educational Development Officer and myself, Liz Wilson.

At the end of the Meeting there were an amazing 14 volunteers for the Steering Committee, which is incredible as some new U3As are still struggling to get a Committee together after several months.

Interest Group lists were full of names and, again I was amazed, because at the end of the Inaugural Meeting on the 27th July, Ashby had EIGHT Interest groups formed, each one with a Leader. This is astounding for a new U3A! Many established U3As have great difficulty getting new groups established and even more problems getting Leaders!

After such a brilliant start, I wish Ashby-de-la-Zouch every success in the future for they deserve to continue to be Amazing! **Report by Liz Wilson**

NEW U3AS

Superb Support for Retford's New U3A (Notts)

Yes there was a tremendous turnout as Retford people flooded into "The Well", at the introductory Meeting of the New Retford U3A.

There are already 20 U3As in Nottinghamshire, including those in nearby Newark, Worksop and Southwell. Retford showed that it was high time that they had their own, for over 120 attended the Meeting on the 27th April – a record number!

The atmosphere was buzzing with enthusiasm and high expectation as the audience were addressed by Edith Senior, Educational and Development Contact

for Nottinghamshire, Tony Breed, Chair of Worksop U3A, Carol Millan the National Educational Development Officer and Liz Wilson.

At the break Interest Group lists were filled to overflowing and, by the end of the Meeting, there were three groups sorted with leaders and many more to be clarified at the next Meeting. There was also an amazing number of volunteers for the Committee, whose Chair will be the experienced and visionary, Thelma Britz, the initiator of the Retford revolution for its own U3A. **Report by Liz Wilson**

Wellingore
(Lincs)

Ashby
(Leics)

Towester
(N'hamptons)

Launch Meetings = *Arnold*
(Notts)

Glenfield
(Leics)

FUTURE FEATURES

HARLAXTON 2011

**U3A PROFILES – Southwell – Northampton – South Leicester – Chesterfield - Sleaford
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

NORTHAMPTON UNIVERSITY

EAST MIDLANDS' AGM

NETWORK NEWS

MORE REPORTS FROM YOU PLEASE!!!!

*Thanks to all who contributed
this issue.*

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