



Dear U3A Members,

Welcome to your March Newsletter. The early daffodils are out in the garden and I do love the crocus when the sun shines. There is plenty going on in your U3A as well so let's put a spring in our step and catch up with the latest opportunities. There just are not enough hours in the week...

In this issue:

1. News and notices
2. Monthly Meetings
3. Outings and Foodies
4. News from the Groups
5. Opportunities in the North West Region
6. Answers to the photo quiz



Photograph number 1. In this newsletter there are five pictures of little details or particular places in Littleborough. You may instantly recognise them. No prizes but answers are at the end of the newsletter. Thank you to Howard Gott in the Photography group for these.

1. News and Notices

a) Membership Renewals 2023/2024

For those members who have not renewed, your Membership fee of £15 is due by 31st March 2023. If you require another copy of your renewal reminder or have any queries, please contact Lynn Wild at memsec.littleboroughu3a@gmail.com or speak to me at the March monthly meeting.

Please note that you need to advise the Membership Secretary of any changes to your details in order for our records to be accurate.

Please inform Lynn if you **do not** wish to renew your membership. Littleborough u3a may incur costs from the u3a Trust if we are not notified of your decision before 31st March 2023

b) New Committee Members

We are still looking for more people to stand for the committee at the AGM in June. Thank you very much to those who have already been in touch and I hope we have given you encouraging responses to your questions. We need both general committee members and those willing to take on particular roles,

especially that of the Business Secretary. Do remember that we are all just volunteers. We go on holiday from time to time, have other social and family commitments. We none of us get to every committee meeting or every monthly meeting. We work together and provide back-up when needed. This works fine as long as there are enough of us so if you can spare some time and are keen to take an interest in the running of the U3A, please do join us. Actually it can be fun, interesting and rewarding!

c) IT Basics Classes

The six IT Basics classes which we ran over the winter at the Coach House, funded by a grant from the Pennine's Township office at Rochdale Council have been a huge success. We had on average 20 members at each session and the feedback we have received has been very positive. Whilst our Treasurer, Mark, led on this project, we have to thank members of the Tech Buddies panel for supporting him at the sessions, and his wife Gillian (our Groups Coordinator) for brewing-up and making sure that everyone who needed support, received it. It would not have been as successful without this support.



Members who came along to these sessions have asked that they continue on a monthly basis until such time as they feel confident to go it alone with their tech. So from the first Monday in March, and continuing each first Monday (other than May due to it being a bank holiday) Mark will be convening an IT Basis/IT Clinic from 2pm to 4pm at Hare Hill House in the park. Any member who wants to come along, is welcome to do so. The group will be self-funded by small weekly subs to cover the cost of the room hire (£20/session) and refreshments. If you would like to come along, dates for your diary for the initial sessions are:

- Monday 6th March
- Monday 3rd April
- Monday 5th June
- Monday 3rd July
- Monday 7th August

There is no obligation to come every week, and content will be driven by the group. Bring your tech with you if it is portable. Mark will be joined by fellow Tech Buddies at each session. If you would like further information, contact Mark on 07981 271005 or at m.j.pearson@me.com.

d) Helpers for Refreshments and Meeting and Greeting at Monthly Meetings

We used to ask the group members to volunteer to help at a monthly meeting once a year or so but Covid lockdowns inevitably broke the pattern and we have relied on a small but very willing group of volunteers. We are very grateful to them. Now that we are up and running with monthly meetings and most groups

are back Gillian will be approaching group convenors to ask them to be prepared to ask for volunteers from their group once a year or so to help at the monthly meeting. Small groups will combine. There will be a rota and plenty of advance notice. No need to feel under pressure – a few volunteers is all that is needed and support will be provided if it's not possible.



Photograph number 2: a corner of Littleborough. Do you recognise it? Answers at the end of this newsletter.

2. Monthly Meetings



We were all so caught up in the Blood Bikers at the January meeting that we nearly ran out of time to drink our tea and coffee! They gave an excellent presentation full of stories and commitment to helping others for no reward except the chance to ride a motorbike (they clearly love riding motorbikes).

Ferrying blood and other vital medical supplies out of hours across Greater Manchester they provide an amazing service with enthusiasm and dedication. Well done U3A members who put a little cash in the helmet – together with the £60 speaker fee, we donated £400 to the blood bike charity.



Our next speaker:

Monday March 13th Our next speaker will be **Michael Astrop**, a member of Todmorden U3A, who will be crossing the border to take us on a tour of **British Brands** for our amusement. That's brands, not bands. I was thinking Black Dyke Mills or Happy Mondays... But I think it's baked beans and Bovril. Maybe. The U3A is one long voyage of discovery.



Photograph Number 3: Where is this in Littleborough?

3. Outings and Foodies

March 30th: Lunch in the garden tea room at Gordon Riggs Garden centre. Meet at 11.30am at the tea room to ensure you get a table in the very pleasant restaurant.

No deposit required but please register your interest at the March meeting or with Lynn Wild: lynnwild.u3a@gmail.com



Photograph 4: these are getting easier I think. What do you think?

News from the Groups: Time for something new

New groups: if you have an idea for a new group and if you are willing to be part of the initial meeting, please contact Gillian Pearson, Groups Coordinator who will help to gauge interest and to initiate meetings. If you want to find out more and be part of an initial meeting for any of the potential new groups below, also contact Gillian: gillianpearson_u3a@icloud.com

There has to be something here to tickle your fancy!



Playing the guitar: please let Gillian know whether/how much you can already play and also whether you would be willing to act as group convenor.

Chess Group: the online group may continue but there is a wish for a new face to face chess group. Knight to King's bishop anyone? (sorry if that is not even a recognised chess move...).



Music Appreciation Group: we used to have one but it fell victim to Covid and now is the time to get it going again.

Have I found your passion yet? Okay well contact Sandra if you are interested in helping to set up these new groups: **Beginners French or Beginners Spanish**. Ole!

There's more:

Creative Writing Group 2: This new group will meet on the fourth Monday of the month at 2pm starting on Monday March 27th at the home of Steve Lister. Our initial challenge is to write 500 words or so in poetry or prose on the subject of 'Somewhere to hang your coat'.

More members very welcome. Please contact Ellen Cruise for more information: ellen.cruise@talktalk.net; phone 01706 551026

History Group: the second meeting of the reformed History Group will be Monday March 20th at 2pm in the History Centre on Littleborough Station. Dilys Pearson will be talking about Whittles Bakery. Please come along.

Quiz Group: next meeting in The Red Lion in Littleborough at 2pm on March 23rd. Just come along to form teams on the day.

Craft Group: Easter baskets on Thursday March 9th at 2pm in Hare Hill House.

Monday March 27th: craft to be confirmed. Please contact Sandra Kokocki for more information.

The Gamester Groups

No gambling at all but here are the reports received from the gaming groups in our U3A. Thank you all for your contributions. You can contact the convenors of these groups by clicking on the bird in the corner of the group page on our website:

<https://u3asites.org.uk/littleborough>

Scrabble

We have been meeting since Autumn 2014. We started at Littleborough Conservative Club where £1 bought us a brew and Bobby made us welcome. When that venue became unavailable we moved to my home and cut the cost of a brew to 50p!

At present there are ten members which is the limit for my orangery! We have one game then a drink and biscuit then a second game when we make sure the two winners from the first game meet up.

People are at different levels of competence but we all hopefully enjoy ourselves.

We cannot take anyone new at the moment but I am happy to have a waiting list. Our sessions are every second Tuesday at 2.00 pm till 4.00 pm.

Lis Kay

Bridge



Christine McMillan-Bodell says: Currently, our numbers are healthy with mostly three full tables playing each Tuesday morning from 10.30 to 12.30. We meet in Littleborough Bowling Club and the cost for each player is £1 which includes tea/coffee/biscuits. You are welcome to come along to a couple of sessions to see whether you wish to join – we have space to set up more tables. We are an established group of players who welcome new players.

At the moment we are learning about 'Control bidding' and the process involved in bidding a slam and looking closely at the best way to lead.



If, you are mathematically curious, Bridge is an endlessly fascinating game, easy to learn, but also mentally challenging to play at the highest level. It is played with 52 cards, dealt into 4 hands, and every hand is different; you will almost certainly never see the exact same deal in your lifetime.

There are, 53,644,737,765,488,792,839,237,440,000 possible deals.

Counting Sheep must be easier! 🐑

Mahjong

The Mahjong group meets fortnightly on Wednesday afternoons in a member's home. There are currently 4 regular members who make a table and play a friendly game with the lovely mahjong tiles. It's a very tactile game with lots of history and interest and quite challenging but fun to play. We would welcome new members and will be happy to teach you to play.

Quiz Group

Do you know who sang Puppet on a string? Can you name the sisters in Little Women? Can you work out anagrams of football teams?

Then come and try out our quizzes!

Venue – Red Lion Pub, Littleborough

Time – Pub opens at 2.00pm and the quiz starts at 2.30pm

Our quiz group meets once a month on a Thursday and various members set the questions, so the format is slightly different each time. Teams are sorted on the day, so just turn up. Dates of quizzes are posted on the website and at the monthly meetings.

If you need more details, please contact Sandra 07828297991



The next newsletter will focus on reports from the musical and craft groups: Ukulele, choir and Craft group. I will be in touch with convenors. Our final focus will be on Photography, genealogy and astronomy. I am struggling to find a link theme or work so any help gratefully received. If I have stupidly missed our your group, please let me know.



Photograph number 5: sometimes we don't really look at what is around us do we?

5. Opportunities for all members in the North West Region. You are probably aware that, in addition to the national U3A structure and the national office, there is a North West regional U3A committee that organises events and activities that are open to members of all U3As in the region. They have just announced the following that you might be interested in:

Residential Summer School: Tuesday August 15th to Friday August 18th at University of Cumbria, Fusehill St. Campus, Carlisle. Courses on offer:

- Archaeology: 'Landscapes and archaeology – unpicking the layers of the past';
- 'The Changing Seasons';
- Literature: 'What the 20th century did to the novel';
- Art: 'Female Artists';
- Architecture: 'From Shelter to the Shard, 2000 years of British architecture';
- Knitting: 'Cables and lace';
- 'Japanese Encounter'.

WOW! Further information is on the North West website – see link below. Or call Alan Hough, 07544 359125

The Big Sing: An invitation to any U3A member who likes to sing, whether or not you are already a member of a singing group. May 10th at the Quaker Meeting House in Liverpool this is an all day event to be led by Fredrik Holm from Lancaster and Morecambe U3A. Booking arrangements will be available from mid March.

Any U3A member can register to receive the North West regional newsletter. Just head to: <https://u3asites.org.uk/north-west>

6. And finally here are the answers for the photographs:

1. The cobbled lane is parallel to Lodge Street
2. The brick alleyway and pillar are off Sale Street
3. The stone arch is over the Sainsbury car park
4. The wooden hare is in front of Hare Hill House
5. The bench arm is in Hare Hill Park

So keep your eyes open because Howard has more of these for the next issue. I hope you enjoyed them.

Thank you for reading this far. I hope to see you soon at a U3A event. Meanwhile I wish you warmth in your sun,

Jo Wiggans

