

u3a
North West Region

Events & News



June – July 2024

**Learn
Laugh
Live**

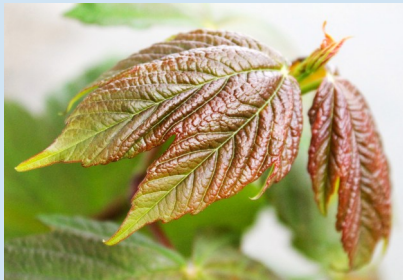
**Do Something
Brilliant Today**



Gill Russell
North West
Committee Chair

u3anwrchair@gmail.com

[u3asites.org.uk/north
west](http://u3asites.org.uk/north-west)



Paul King
North West
Newsletter Editor

editor.nwu3a@gmail.com

Greetings from the Chair

I recently had these two comments, which have caused me some concern.

- From a group which rarely attends any activity outside their u3a: 'We are a very strong group and we don't see why we should get involved at regional or national level.'
- After advertising this year's Big Sing, which is for ANYONE who enjoys singing: 'We already have a singing group so we didn't advertise this to our members.'

Hmmm! Could this be why we only have 40 people registered for the Big Sing this time? In previous years this has been such a popular activity that we've filled the room to bursting point. Maybe it's also why we have less than 30 registered for our annual conference and AGM when we've had 50 or more. We have to consider whether it is a viable event before we need to start paying cancellation fees. There are still places available for both. Details are on the NW website events page - u3asites.org.uk/north-west/events

A decision to join in the regional or national activities should not be the decision of a committee. Your members are entitled to know what is offered and it is their prerogative to accept or reject the invitation to participate so please circulate our information. Past events have proved that members who attended really enjoyed the opportunity to talk to people from other u3as, exchange ideas and information and share expertise.



The regional committee members are all volunteers and would welcome your support. I'd like my next message to you to be a more positive one.

Best wishes. Gill

Why are we the North West Region of u3as

Well, it's simple really. You are all geographically located in the north west of England. The role of the committee is to support our NW Trustee by facilitating contact and planning events our members can share and enjoy. A decision to form a committee was taken by our north west groups in 2008 and the region with its officially registered title above is now a registered charity (1159091). This is why we must organise an AGM. To make it more interesting we organise activities in the hope that this will encourage members to attend.

North West Region Conference and AGM update

Tuesday July 2nd –Liverpool

There are still plenty of places available so please encourage members to come. Issues accessing the registration form has been corrected.

Our afternoon entertainment has changed because Fool's Gold had to cancel. We have invited Barry Humphries to delight us and he has accepted.

In the morning we will have some short activities and discussions before Barry after lunch. The AGM will be the last event of the day and registration details are on the website.



Venues

Finding venues for our regional events is not easy. It is often a 'bone of contention' for some members. When choosing a venue, we have to assess cost, accessibility, comfort and refreshments. We try to ensure they are close to transport routes from across the region.

The three most used are the Quaker Meeting House in Liverpool; which has the most rooms available for breakout activities, the Exchange in Preston and the Gateway Centre in Warrington. We have also occasionally used the Quaker Meeting House in Manchester.

All have advantages and disadvantages but the Liverpool venue has been the most popular with our members.



If we do something too far north, the southern groups can't reach them and too far south causes the same problem in reverse.

Obviously we welcome suggestions for other venues that meet our requirements and we continue to hold some meetings online so that people who are unable to travel can join. Hybrid meetings are sometimes possible if a venue has the right facilities.

North West Summer School

Tues 13th August – Friday 16th August

University of Cumbria, Carlisle

Full Board Residential Delegate; £420

This proving to be popular again this year and members from around the country with just a few places left. Details on the website in the events section <https://u3asites.org.uk/north-west/events>. Join members from all over the UK.



I'm sure those attending will be able to give you a very positive report. We will welcome ideas for courses at future summer schools so if you have any suggestions please get in touch – planning for 2025 starts early!

Calling all Cryptic Crossword Groups

Last year, Knutsford Cryptic Crossword Group devised an on-line quiz comprising cryptic clues linked to a specific theme (e.g. Musical Instruments) and challenged Chester's group to solve it. In the spirit of friendly rivalry Chester did so and responded with a quiz of their own.

This has developed into a regular event with both groups finding it a useful source of Homework for their members and practice in both solving and setting clues.

Knutsford and Chester groups are now seeking new participants, at the same time extending contacts and cooperation between existing groups. We would like to invite you join a bi-monthly Cryptic Quiz Challenge.



Initially, a Taster Quiz is proposed. There could then be a six-month Series in which the member groups would take it in turns to be Quizmaster and set the clues, say around 15, on their own theme. The Quizmaster subsequently issues the solutions, receives " scores" from the participants and provides feedback on the outcome. It is not proposed to issue individual results.

Knutsford are willing to issue and coordinate the Taster and the initial quiz. It would then rotate.

Would any interested Groups please contact Hilary Scarratt, Secretary to NW Region of u3as, at nwru3asec@gmail.com by (June 30) with a view to receiving the Taster Quiz early July."

They who give, have all things. They who withhold, have nothing. (Hindu Proverb)

News from the u3as

Lancaster and Morecambe

Lancaster and Morecambe u3a are celebrating their 35th Anniversary in style trying to involve as many groups as possible in our 35 Challenge.

These are just a few of the events and activities which are taking place throughout the year.

The Rowing Group turned in an absolutely stunning performance at the end of April



Not only did they succeed in rowing the 35 miles on the River Lune, but they did also so in dreadful conditions: cold, windy and heavy rain, particularly at the end. Several of them rowed three times the usual distance they rowed during a session and by the end they were using sponges to empty the boats of rainwater. But they weren't daunted, didn't give up and achieved a wonderful result. Congratulations!



The Walking Groups are taking photos of themselves at 35 different Trig Points



The Exploring Food Group produced some 1989 dishes – including Angel Delight!



Modern Languages held a Language Café;

Happy Feet to a Latin Beat will be doing a flashmob in Lancaster city centre;

Nordic Walking are doing the Cross Bay Walk

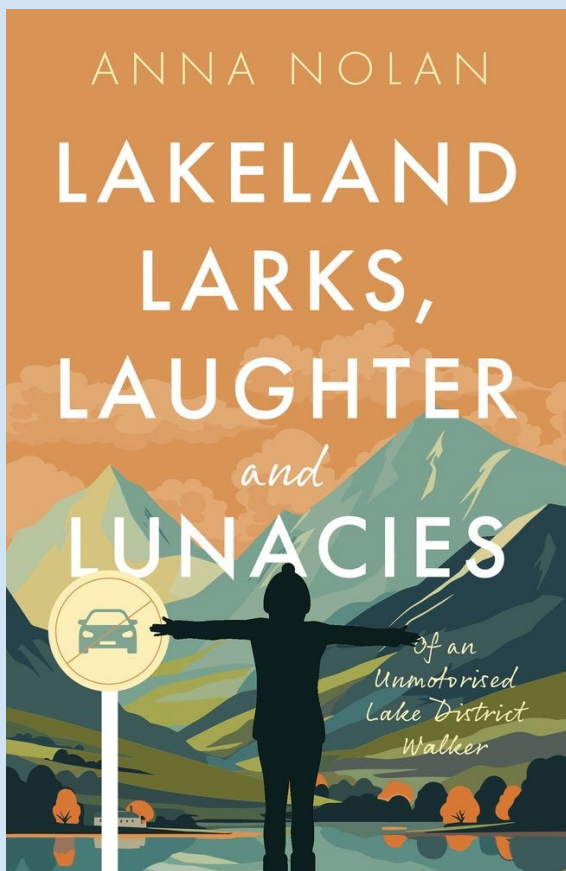
Additionally on our website are quizzes, art works and photos all related to 35. Groups are coming up with new ideas all the time and it really seems to have caught the imagination.

lancaster-morecambe.u3asite.uk/35th-anniversary

Margaret Hemming

Skiddaw (Cumbria)

Anna Nolan, the groups Publicity Officer and leader of the Roamers Walking Group, pens an article (of circa 500 words) on every single walk she leads. These articles are published at least once a fortnight under the tagline *Skiddaw u3a Roamers* – by the local newspaper, *The Keswick Reminder*. Drawing readers' attention to the activities of our u3a and that of the movement.



The articles have now resulted in the publishing of two books by the Book Guild Publishing imprint.

Lakeland Larks, Laughter and Lunacies (ISBN: 9781916668942) will be published in June with a follow up ***More Lakeland Larks, Laughter and Lunacies*** (ISBN: 9781835740507) due in September both £8.99 – see bookguild.co.uk/bookshop for more details.

u3as we need your news

articles

It is disappointing that in this edition of North West Events & News only two articles were received by the u3as that make up the region were from the almost 100 u3as in our area. This is your forum to promote and publicize all the great work you are doing within our network and I would invite more of you to 'blow your own trumpet (or should that be strum your own ukulele)' and share what we are all up to. Does your u3a do something unique and interesting?

My own u3a, South Manchester for instance has a twice monthly Circus Skills Class (I know, running away to join the circus at



own age....) with our own paid tutor often leading the class and teaching us all manner or plate spinning, juggling and other Circus skills – I personally cannot wait for the trapeze class (which if it happens I will be sat watching). All joking aside, it is great to learn a new skill or even rediscover old ones and through the region we can share inspiration.

Use, it, don't loose it, please do send those articles in. I would like to be able to feature at least six u3a groups activities each edition. 200 words word be great, ideally written so I can just slot it in without editing and also we really want to see your pictures. Articles can be sent to me directly editor.nwu3a@gmail.com.

Paul King
Editor

New trustee at the Third Age Trust

It is pleasing to report that David Blanchflower, a trustee of the Aughton & Ormskirk u3a, has been elected by the u3as located in the North West Region as a trustee of the Third Age Trust.

Introducing himself David says – *“I am currently a public Governor of Preston Royal NHS Hospital and was previously a Public Governor at Liverpool Royal NHS Hospital. I am a regular volunteer with the National Trust. My involvement with the Aughton and Ormskirk U3A is as a Trustee, member of the finance committee, group leader and have previously held the position of Chair of the Group Support Committee. I was a trustee of a national charity for over 40 years, holding the position of Chair, Treasurer and Chair of the Media Committee for 20 years.”*

The u3a Third Age Trust is the UK-wide body that represents over a 1,000 u3as with around 400,000 members in the UK. The Trust works with local u3as providing guidance, learning and administrative support.

The Trust is overseen by Trustees who are the Board of Directors and have legal responsibility for the decision-making processes that form and shape the future of the u3a movement.

The Third Age Trust provides practical central support to u3as. This ranges from guidance, advice, model documents and policies such as constitutions, policies on areas relating to data protection, finance, insurance, legal risk assessments – to marketing materials and guidance on website, communications and branding.

David is looking forward in the coming months to being invited to attend the meetings of the Cluster/Region groups in the North West Region.

David Blanchflower

david.blanchflower@u3a.org.uk



Busy Bees. So much to write about!

Always, I have found that u3as are a positive hive of activity. Every Group has several ‘stories’ to tell. Often, there are lively engaging photos to take – and, these days, just about everyone seems to have a photo-ready smartphone! The range of opportunities for getting our u3a stories seen and heard seems to grow by the day.

Although in many places, local newspapers are teetering on the brink of extinction. In others, long established titles are surviving and prospering. Of course, lively interesting websites and eye-catching social media posts have become the way ahead for publicity-conscious organisations. I want to encourage you and your members to discover at least one really good ‘story’ each week, one with a human-interest angle and with a close-up ‘active’ photo opportunity.

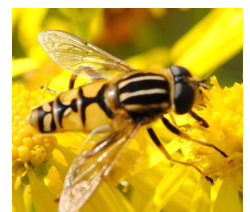
The challenge, then, is to ‘convert’ that one ‘story’/photo in as many different ways as possible – to appeal to a local print media reader, to someone looking at your website, to those enthusiastic social media followers. Of course, remembering to send a copy to the Communications Department at u3a-UK to feature in the monthly u3a Friends Newsletter, in the next edition of u3a Matters or in Sources. The content may be picked up by the Podcast Team. Just one ‘story’/photo being seen and read by so many people. Great.

Kelvin Rushworth

Public Relations Adviser

North West England

kelvinregnat@outlook.com





u3a

North West Region

**Learn
Laugh
Live**

