



Learn, laugh, live

Settle District Newsletter

Issue Number 2/18 November 2019

settledistrictu3a.org Registered Charity No 1095635

Learn, laugh, live with Settle District U3A

Monthly meetings are on the second Thursday of the month at Victoria Hall at 10.30am, coffee from 10am, just £1

14th November, Lakeland

Peaks '542 in 2016'

Bill Honeywell



Our Christmas Party
rescheduled due to the General Election, is now on
5th December 2019



NEW MEMBERS' WELCOME

Welcome to our 49 new members. Yes, 49!! You are invited to our new members' meeting on 22 November to give you a proper welcome and the chance to meet other new members and committee members. Our membership secretary, Chris Chandler, will email new members directly with details.

WELL WHAT ABOUT THAT?

Our Chair, Les Chandler, tells us what's on his mind this month



I've spent much of my time this month visiting some of our U3A Groups and what a treat it's been. Great Lives introduced me to the fascinating life story of 'local boy' George Birkbeck, a pioneer of adult education. An exhilarating session at Dance Exercise helped me find my inner Bruno Tonioli, and with the Line Dancing group I learned the value of activities which are great fun and stretch both mind and body. Singing for Pleasure was pure joy and then there was Recorders! These humble medieval instruments get a bad press but my time with the Recorders group was nothing short of wonderful. Magical, joyful music, played with great skill and dedication - made all the more impressive when you realise the players have to coordinate four different parts: descant, treble, tenor and bass. Truly amazing.

What my group visits have shown me is just how relevant the U3A is to our community. Here are people learning skills, having fun, and living life to the full. I'm full of admiration for all of you. You're an inspiration. And I've still lots more groups to visit, starting with Ukulele just before the monthly meeting on 14th November. I can't wait!

When I've not been touring our groups this month I've been wrestling with our MPs' decision to hold a general election on 12th December, which means Victoria Hall will be a polling station on the day of our Christmas Meeting. Faced with finding an alternative venue or moving the date the Committee has decided - having considered all the pro's and con's - to keep the Christmas Meeting at Victoria Hall but move the date to 5 December. This isn't ideal but we're sure it's the best option.

Now you know what's on my mind please tell me what's on yours. I'm keen to hear your views on all things U3A, especially if you think there are issues you think the U3A Committee needs to address. Catch me at one of our monthly meetings or e-mail me at chairperson@settledistrictu3a.org.

Best wishes, Les.

MEET OUR COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Hi everyone, I am Nita Hart, your vice chairperson. My responsibilities are to stand in for the chairperson when necessary and assist other members of the committee as required. You might recognise me as Group Leader of the Walking group or as a member of several other groups, usually to do with the outdoors or dancing. I joined our U3A in 2008 and was previously on the committee from 2011-2016, - which just goes to prove, 'never say never again'!



WOULD YOU LIKE TO HELP WITH RESEARCH?

Researcher Georgina Floridou at the University of Sheffield is running a project funded by the British Academy to understand how involuntary music in the mind is affected by ageing. She is interested in hearing from those of us who are 60+ and could use a smartphone or tablet for a period of 4 days. You get a £5 voucher for Amazon if you take part. If you would like more details please see the website or contact the newsletter editor on the email address below.

BIRDWATCHING GROUP

At our November meeting we were treated to a fascinating presentation on the 'Birds of the Gambia'. The RSPB's James Bray introduced us to some special birds including the spectacularly colourful Yellow-crowned Gonolek and the bizarrely plumed Standard-winged Nightjar. We also gained an insight into the ups and downs of scientific study in less well-developed parts of the world. Now we know what it's like to ring a vulture!

The Group's next meeting, on Monday 2 December 2019, takes us to Beacon Fell in a search of the not-so-common Common Crossbill (pictured).



Amongst other oddities these birds collect spiders' webs to build their nest and, unlike most other birds, they breed all year round.

They can be difficult to find, but Beacon Fell is as good a place as any for them.

Les Chandler - lchandler52@gmail.com.

GREAT LIVES GROUP

In September, Chris Petrie gave an excellent talk on Samuel Plimsoll whose eponymous Line on vessels transformed safety at sea. In October, Robin Bundy gave a fascinating account of Settle-born George Birkbeck, one of the great pioneers of education for the working man. He began his schooling at Giggleswick school, and later became professor of natural philosophy at what is now the University of Strathclyde. George held free public lectures on Saturdays for all comers and following this, the first Mechanics' Institute was formed in Glasgow followed by the London Mechanics' Institute. George encouraged the development of Mechanics' Institutes throughout the UK. Birkbeck died in London in 1841 but his local beginnings are remembered by a memorial in St Akelda's church in Giggleswick.

Our next meeting will be on Wednesday 20th November, Victoria Hall, 11am, when Alan Hemsworth will give a presentation on the lives of "The Lords Bolton of Wensleydale".

John Jebson

STOP PRESS - NEW EXERCISE GROUP

30 members have joined this new group, enjoying seated exercise to music, classical to modern. We meet most Mondays from 10.30 - 11.30. Contact the group leader for more info
Debi Burrige - phone 01729 825855

For more information about groups contact the groups coordinator Jeanne Hine - groupcoordinator@settledistrictu3a.org

Many thanks for the items in this month's newsletter. For the next edition, articles of **150 words max** to

newslettereditor@settledistrictu3a.com

by **Monday 25th November 2019**.

We may edit articles to fit the space available.