

NORTHUMBRIA REGION U3A

Newsletter, March 2008

Some stuff from the Editor

The March 2008 edition of the Regional U3A Newsletter, a little late I'm afraid, but holidays keep interfering with work nowadays, so apologies for that, no, not the holidays, the tardiness in publishing the newsletter.

The newsletter is intended for all U3A members in the Northumbria Region and you should get a copy, or at least sight of a copy, from your Committee. All those U3A members who do get the opportunity to see a copy please let your fellow members know that you have seen it, show it to them and get them to ask your Committee for a copy for themselves, we need all the publicity we can get.

To those U3A's that have contributed to this edition of your newsletter, thank you most sincerely folks. To everyone including those U3A's that have, and those that haven't sent anything for this newsletter, then we would like to hear from you. Please note the deadline for your copy for the next issue (July 2008), this is shown at the bottom of the page, but for the avoidance of doubt, contributions no later than Sunday 15th June 2008 please. Don't just leave it to your Committee to do this, all items are welcome, from ANY U3A member, my contact details are shown at the bottom of this editorial. It needn't be typed, I have an army of typists just sitting here waiting for some work – only kidding of course, the best way to get anything to me is by email, every email will be answered. I'm looking forward to hearing from you already.

Thanks a lot, take care and have a good time on your outings.

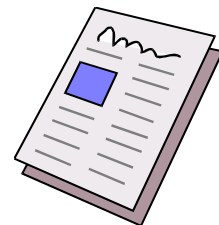
David Grundy – Newsletter Editor

Email regionalu3anews@btinternet.com
Telephone 0191 410 4979
Snail mail 43 Melbeck Drive, Urpeth Grange, Ouston, Chester-le-Street,
County Durham, DH2 1TY,

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Notices

At Home with Berwick U3A

Berwick U3A are offering an invitation to any U3A members who might like to go along and help them celebrate their fifth birthday. They are in the early stages of planning the event which is expected to take place over two days. The dates have been set for Wednesday and Thursday 10th and 11th September 2008. There will be more details from Berwick U3A nearer to the event. If you want to find out more before then, please contact Jeff Armstrong whose email address is jeffrey.armstrong@virgin.net

Wooler U3A – Battle of Flodden Study Day

Wooler U3A are hosting the Battle of Flodden Study Day on Wednesday 3rd September 2008. If you are interested in this event then please contact John Leiper for further details, his email address is lorbottle@tiscali.co.uk

**Please note the deadline for contributions to go in the next issue is
Sunday 15th June 2008**

News from the Region

Alnwick U3A

Last year our secretary was contacted by a couple from Canterbury U3A who were contemplating relocation to Alnwick. They were attracted to Northumberland by sporadic holiday visits - including their honeymoon forty six years ago - and by features, such as that in the Daily Telegraph some years back, rating Alnwick as the best place to live in the UK (or was it England?).

To check out the Telegraph's claims for the place, they came up with the idea of using their U3A membership to request a meeting with Alnwick U3A members who had, in the past, also migrated to the 'frozen north!' They were welcomed on a sunny January day (typical of Alnwick!) to the home of the chairperson and her husband, who had previously lived in the Home Counties, and two other activity group leaders; one emanating from the Greater Manchester area, the other originating from New Zealand.

Our friends from Canterbury have now completed their move to the Alnwick area and are, of course, involved in various U3A activities. They claim that the common sense of identity that U3A membership provides was a decisive influence on their decision to trek north

Alnwick U3A

Berwick-upon-Tweed U3A

2008 leads us into our fifth year of existence. To celebrate we are in the early stages of planning a two-day event whereby other Northumbria Region U3A's will be invited to come here and help us celebrate. It will take the form of an "At home with Berwick U3A" with members hosting our visitors on a 'Bed and Breakfast' basis overnight. The dates have been set for the 10th and 11th of September, 2008. These were thought to be the best dates as Berwick, as a tourist centre, virtually closes from the end of October to Easter (even statues are mothballed). It would still give a reasonable number of daylight hours to do the things we want to do ... and it may be warmer!. Details will be available by the time this is included in the next Regional Newsletter in March. Preliminary letters have already been forwarded to each U3A's secretary. If anyone is interested in joining us you can telephone me on :-0189 078 1400 or email me at jeffrey.armstrong@virgin.net or contact your own U3A's Secretary.

At present we have 185 members, our highest ever total. We run 31 groups; have monthly OPEN Meetings; an ongoing Oral History project (which will culminate in an A5 publication sometime in 2009 or 2010); a monthly Newsletter with Activities Timetable distributed by an able team of twelve.

As a U3A we are based at The Maltings Arts and Theatre Centre in town which accommodates 12 of our groups and OPEN Meetings while seven other regular venues accounts for most of the remaining groups. The residue are all home-based.

We actively encourage enjoyment, fun and socialising before academia which has resulted in Berwick flourishing as a happy, virtually 'clique less', U3A.

We have a website on www.berwicku3a.org.uk which is in the process of being revamped and brought up to date.

Many of our groups cease 'trading' during the summer but we have three or more visits/outings open to all members and have been to the Falkirk Wheel;

York; Beamish; New Lanark and The Tall Ships, to name but a few. Our one attempt at organising our own itinerary visit to Holland this year did not happen as we couldn't raise the 30+ members needed to make it viable. Perhaps we can try again next year and open it to adjacent U3A's to join us!

At present, we are actively engaged in targeting our 'potential customers' through Estate Agents and the various work places throughout the town and its hinterland, adding to our leaflet campaign already two years old.

Jeff Armstrong (Chair)

Cestria U3A at Chester-le-Street

Cestria U3A will soon start its third year of existence with a current total membership of 134. We are extremely pleased with our progress in such a short time.

However progress like this comes at a price and we may soon have to call a stop to our recruitment of new members and start a waiting list.

Because of limitations placed on us by the Fire Certificate we are unable to have more than 100 persons in the room where we meet, our Committee therefore has decided to limit our membership to 150. A hundred on the Fire Certificate and one hundred and fifty members you ask yourself, what's that about? Well, our 'get-out' clause is our statistics which show that only an average of 57 per cent of our members attend our monthly meeting which at our last count would give us 175 members (121 actual members at that time) before we needed to call a halt to recruitment. To be on the safe side of it all our Committee decided on the 150 level.

We have also been delighted in the number of Activity Groups that we have formed since we started, and we currently have fifteen, and counting.

In recent months we have had our Christmas Spectacular where we were entertained by Eileen Glenton with 'Songs from the Music Hall'. We have had the Cestria U3A Annual Quiz, listened to tales of the Tyne Keelmen, the story of

the development of the Gateshead Little Theatre. Held spellbound by the 'Tales from the Victorian Polis' and learned all about growing potatoes.

More to come about Cestria U3A in the next edition of the newsletter.

David Grundy - Secretary

Darlington U3A

Our year ended with a carol service attended by about 140 of our members. A contribution was made to the church.

All activities stopped for the Christmas period, and were resumed early in January. Three new activity groups were formed viz, Chess, Wine Appreciation, and Carpet Bowls. The Carpet Bowls has got off to a fine start and is proving very popular. Chess and Wine Appreciation have yet to get into full stride.

All our other activity groups are well attended. The garden group has had its first lecture, and they will start visiting gardens later in the spring. Despite the inclement weather the walking group have continued to venture out ending inevitably at a local hostelry to enjoying lunch in comfort. One of our members has given us a very interesting talk on 'The Jarrow March' This proved to be very popular due to the local interest.

Our financial year ended on 31st December and to date 270 members have renewed their subscription so we are well on our way to retaining our previous membership of 300. We have had our Annual General Meeting at which the Chairman, Treasurer and Membership Secretary were re-elected. We have a new secretary, and several new committee members.

Harry Gibbs

Durham U3A

Durham U3A announce that they will be hosting this year's Northumbria Region U3A Quiz Social Evening on Thursday 22 May 2008 (see Notices on page 1). Those attending should arrive at 6.30 for 7.00 p.m. There is parking around the centre which is situated behind the Abbey Sports Centre on Abbey Road, Pity Me (opposite ASDA).

The evening is open to all – quizzers and non-quizzers alike. The quizzes are expected to be entertaining and strictly non-erudite! All will be on a table team basis.

Derek Sowell

Gateshead U3A

Gateshead U3A are going from strength to strength and now have about 150 members with generally about 90 attend our monthly meetings. We have increased the number of our active activity group to 22 and are planning to start a Discussion Group, a Spanish Language Speaking group and a Yoga Group.

The early stages of planning our 10th Anniversary celebration is in progress for 2009, a steering committee having been formed to formulate some exciting ideas.

Gateshead itself is now becoming a very progressive town with lots of grand ideas for its future. There is already the award winning Millennium Bridge over the River Tyne with the Baltic Arts Centre and The Sage Gateshead Music Centre in the same locality. Saltwell Park in Gateshead has been nominated one of the best Parks in the North of England and, of course, there is the Angel of the North. The town centre is about to have a face lift to take us into the future, So, hopefully, we will be spoilt for choice for our anniversary celebrations.

Anne Finn

Northallerton U3A

At our AGM on 9th January, two long-standing members of our Committee stood down, Maggy Grocott, latterly our Chairman and Shirley Anne Widhöf, our Secretary for 10 years, who tells us she initially took the job on only for a year to *help out*. Both ladies are much missed and thanked for their sterling work over such a long period. John Buckle is now Chairman. Deirdre Sturdy our new Secretary and her husband David, having bravely volunteered to be our new Speaker Finder was subsequently co-opted to the vacant post of Vice Chairman. Other committee members remain the same but thanks are also due to Fred and Brenda Kemp for their excellent work as Speaker Finders over the last few years.

Following her accident whilst out bird-watching around the turn of the year, we are pleased to have Joyce McKay back with us, for as well as being well known in the Northumbria Region she also leads no fewer than 3 of our activity groups here in Northallerton.

The new Tap Dancing group led by Mave Hann-Shackleton has proved extremely popular with well over 20 members attending – another opportunity to exercise as well as Keeping Fit and four Walking Groups, The Jazz Appreciation Group started last year by Fred Kemp is also flourishing with a monthly attendance approaching 30.

On 15th January we had a joint outing with South Durham U3A to North Shields to visit the DFDS *King of Scandinavia*, meeting up with several coach loads of U3A members from other points of the Northumbria Region. Our own programme of daytime coach outings gets underway on 2nd April with a trip to Vindolanda and Hexham.

John Buckle

Ponteland U3A

U3A activities are blossoming in Ponteland. A very successful New Members meeting was hosted by a committee member with over 20 attending in September.

New members bring new ideas – a well subscribed Recorder Group of 16 started in December which now meets twice a month. There is a mixture of beginners and more experienced players progressing through a series of pieces and even venturing into three part harmony at times. Great fun is had by all, although husbands of the hosts don't always enjoy the experience.

The first 'Away Day' outing will be a visit to York in May. The 'Away Day' outings are to be separate from all the other outings organised by many of the Special Interest groups.

All three gardening groups have full programmes organised for the summer months. The new Garden Visiting group already has a waiting list.

Convenors of all thirty groups have a meeting each September. Reports are compiled for the Annual Report that is presented to all members at the Annual General Meeting in February.

We have a full programme of monthly meetings arranged for the first Wednesday of each month. We had a wonderful demonstration of Birds of Prey from the operator of the Kielder Bird of Prey Centre. At Christmas there was musical entertainment, community carol singing and a beautiful faith tea with over 100 of our members attending.

Muriel Sobo (Ponteland member) shared all the information she has collected and published on the Land Girls *The Forgotten Army of Northumberland* in January, and in March John Moreels gave us a super illustrated talk – *Nostalgic Views of the North* including some 'very' old photographs

The AGM in February confirmed the officers for the year. The U3A Choir, under the direction of Brian Prickett (Northumbria Region U3A Secretary), came up with a number of new items, and we had a super faith tea, again. Syd Cowan (*Vice Chairman*)

Prudhoe and District U3A

A group of local people held a meeting last November to gauge interest in forming a U3A in Prudhoe and the surrounding district. The response was excellent and Prudhoe & District U3A became full members of the Third Age Trust in February.

We meet on the last Monday of each month in St Mary Magdalene church hall in Prudhoe from 10:00 am to noon, speakers have been arranged for each meeting until the end of the year. To date we have 15 activity groups covering Walking, Watercolour Painting, Genealogy, Creative Writing, Astronomy, French, Craft, Poetry, Role of Women in the 20th Century, Book Club, Bird Watching, Lunch Club, Sage Group, Theatre Club and Scrabble.

Our membership currently stands at 57 and growing by the month. One of our convenors, Ken Dance, recently worked with a local Cub Scouts Group. He provided help and practical instruction enabling the boys to qualify for the award of the recently introduced Astronomy Badge, our first experience of reaching out to the wider community. Jenny Littlechild

Richmond U3A

Our membership continues to increase. The monthly General Meetings are well attended and since Christmas we have had two good speakers who have attracted visitors and new members.. On of these, Lorna Kitchin, our Vice Chairman, spoke about her visit to Antarctica,

Regarding publicity, we now have a page on the Richmond town website. Another opportunity was given us in November when our local church held a "Tree-time" exhibition and invited all local organisations to take part. Some of our members were able to display their artistic talents on our U3A tree. Still to come is a display in the new Richmond Station building, organised by Help The Aged with the intention of publicising what is on offer in the area for the over Fifties. And of course there will be our Coffee Morning in the Town Hall in May! We do try!

Pat Croft

Stokesley U3A

The first three months of 2008 have seen a sharp increase in membership, with the 200 mark being breached, and consequent headaches for our Committee with regard to finding a suitable venue for our monthly meetings. The phenomenal success of our U3A seems to be mirrored throughout the region, and the country. Since our launch in the autumn of 2004 we have been able to use Stokesley Town Hall, but with a seating/safety capacity of 110, and with about 50% of membership attending the monthly meetings, the committee is searching for an alternative venue in the town. The only one that could take up to 150 is the Methodist Church. The alternative prospect facing the committee is capping membership; so far this has been strongly resisted.

Our monthly meetings continue to entertain members with some very good speakers and also provide a vibrant social environment. Recent room filling talks by our own members have included one on the history of the now defunct railway that used to run through Stokesley *Your Next Station Stop is Stokesley* by Tony Daniels and *York Minster and Its Hidden Secrets* by Shirley Hamilton.

Our Activity Groups have now expanded to 16, with the addition of a Travel Group. This group will organise coach trips to local places of interest, with the first two already arranged. A trip to York in May, with a guided tour around the Minster, complementing our January speaker; then a visit to the Alnwick Garden in July.

In February our Natural History Group had its first outdoor meeting of the year with a visit to the Tees Valley Wildlife Reserve at Coatham Marsh near Redcar. The Art History Group has just completed a very popular and well attended series of three talks on *Women Artists from the Renaissance to the 20th-Century*. With so much activity going on within Stokesley U3A, it's a great compliment to our Secretary, Kate Faulkes, for producing an information packed Newsletter, and our Web Master, Liz Colbourn, for maintaining the web site, and keeping members informed of all our events.

Tony Daniels

Teesdale U3A

Now We Are One

April 2008 will see the first birthday of Teesdale U3A. In the space of the intervening year we have grown from non-existent to over a hundred members and have a dozen or so lively groups. At this stage it is a good opportunity to thank the officers of Northumbria region and the committee members of our neighbouring groups who were ready to offer support whenever, as a confused Business Secretary, I asked, 'What would you do about?'...

So, by way of practical thanks, I would like to share with all the regional U3A's an extremely valuable resource which we have on our doorstep and which could be of use to them. In Teesdale we have the Moor House Upper Teesdale National Nature Reserve. Every year, in Spring and Summer they produce a range of monthly events of varying lengths and degrees of difficulty; some about birds, some about plants, others about geology, archaeology or photography. Some of these target an adult audience, and others are aimed at families with children *What SHALL we do with the grandchildren today?* All the walks and activities are led by experts and are all FREE unless refreshments are involved.

Now comes the best bit for U3A's. If you want to come to the reserve and need to get the most out of the visit you can book a Green Guide FREE for a whole hour, a whole afternoon or a whole day. Green Guides are volunteers who have an interest in the reserve and surrounding area and have taken part in a training programme so they can act as guides. Added to all, that the reserve staff are happy to give a talk about Moor House Upper Teesdale to any U3A.

If you would like to have a programme of the events taking place on the reserve you can contact me through Teesdale U3A, or go direct to the Reserve on telephone number 0183 362 2374.

In conclusion and just to whet your appetite our Car Birding group was out on Tuesday and practically fell over Oyster Catchers, Redshank, Lapwing, Canada Geese, Great Crested Grebes in fine plumage, a Kestrel sorting out a trespassing Buzzard, Tufted Duck, Widgeon and, the crème de la crème, Black Grouse 'showing well.' In total we notched up over 30 species on a two hour trip around the reservoirs).

This looks a little like an advert, and I suppose it is, because like all of you, we are proud of our area and are always pleased to share it with others.

Anne Harbron

Washington U3A

Our membership renewal has started, and is due for completion by the 30th April. As we have a large waiting list we are asking members, whom we haven't seen much during the past year, if they really wish to rejoin. When I did this last year I received a reply from a members daughter, who had been paying the annual fee, even though her mother wasn't fit enough to attend. We have reached the stage of possibly having to ask visitors to wait until we can see if there is enough room for them to visit our monthly meetings, as we had no spare seats at the last meeting.

The current committee are reluctant to try to start a second U3A in the area, as we already have problems getting a committee together ourselves and they feel that they may be asked to take on extra responsibilities. The meeting room, for a monthly meeting, is not a problem, but activities would have to be in members homes, as we already use our Activity room for most of the week, and there is little spare capacity. Also the charges could be a problem for a new group without funding.

We have applied for a grant from Barclay's Bank, via Age Concern, to pay for a guided walk around Durham City in May. Hopefully the day will be fair. We have a group who go on unusual outings and Archery is for the June expedition. In the past few months. they have been to the Ski slope at Whickham, and have also been Go Kart racing

We have a new website which is kept up to date with the latest Washington U3A newsletter. Some of our activities close for the summer, so that we can keep ahead of our gardening.

Pat Gauntlett

Wear Tees U3A

We have our monthly meetings at Bishop Auckland Town Hall and now have 227 members with 17 active activity groups, the most recently formed and one of the most popular, is 'Wildlife' whose leaders organise many interesting outings, talks and trips. They alone have over 70 members and are fortunate that the surrounding areas of Weardale

and Teesdale are within easy access as well as ex-industrial sites now scheduled as wildlife sanctuary's. Another new group is 'Current Affairs' which has also produced an interesting programme of discussions and with visiting speakers.

Recently, we were successful in a bid for grant support to 'Awards for All' receiving over £9k that groups are now putting to good use. This will transform many activities particularly photography and even the walking groups now have GPS, digital mapping and radio communications. The main monthly meeting now uses a powerful digital projector and a modern computer. Special courses in First Aid and History have been successful, and all have been funded from the grant.

John Coulthard

Whickham U3A

Since our last contribution we have had at our monthly meetings interesting talks on Life at Sea, Victorian Sunday, Street Children of Brazil, Hungary, and Anne Boleyn. The last mentioned was given by our friend Professor John Derry who as usual both informed and entertained our members with details of an exciting period of our history.

Our August meeting was our Summer Strawberry Tea - well attended and with the proceeds of a raffle raised £199 for our charity of the year.

Comments from members who attended the Region's Celebration of the 25th Anniversary of the U3A movement in the British Isles varied from enthusiastic to complaints about the food available. These were conveyed to the organising Committee of the Region who no doubt will have included the suggestions in their report for the benefit of the organiser of a future Region event.

At last there are signs that the amended proposals for the revision of the national structure of U3A by the National Executive Committee will be soon be ready for distribution to all U3A's to peruse and send back their comments. It seems that the U3A's in Northumbria Region will not be greatly affected apart from a change to the group name.

Len Cline

Wooler U3A

Who says size doesn't matter?

The difference in size between the fourteen foot long French pike and the shorter English bill hook certainly did matter for the participants of the Battle of Flodden – as anyone signing up for Wooler U3A's study day on the subject will find out.

"The English victory at Flodden was down to a number of factors, not least of which was the superior battlefield strategy of a wily third-ager, the Earl of Surrey," says John Leiper, one of the organisers.

"It's a fascinating tale and as well as the organised lectures by local historians, we'll be taking our visitors out onto the battlefield to see the terrain for themselves as well as making a trip to the Flodden museum at Etal.

"It promises to be a really good day with a chance to enjoy our great scenery," says John.

The study day will take place on Wednesday, September 3 and booking is going well.

The event will run from 9:45am to 4:00pm and will cost £15. Lunch, refreshments and afternoon tea are all included in the price as well as transport to the various sites. There is a limit of 100 places and anyone interested should contact Joyce Watts, on 01890 840494, for more information.



Waxing artistic



Wooler's craft group have been taking a tip or two from the ancient Greeks and Romans and trying their hand at encaustic art – using melted wax to create pictures and designs. U3A member Marion Sinton has been practising encaustic art for several years and she ran a workshop for the craft group to show them how to put irons to a more artistic use.

The blocks of coloured wax are melted onto a specially designed iron and then transferred to a piece of card to create the picture.

The idea came from the ancient Greeks who used melted wax to waterproof their ships and later began to colour the wax so they could decorate the ships with designs at the same time.

The idea was taken up by artists who decorated wooden panels for use on the walls of houses and tombs. In Egypt, between the first and third centuries, Romans commissioned likenesses of the deceased which were created on thin wooden panels using coloured waxes and then laid over the head of the mummified body.

Jenny Pollock

The Battle of Flodden Study Day has been well subscribed but there are still some places left. The event will be a very interesting one and set in beautiful north Northumberland countryside. Should anyone wish to combine it with a few days away there is plenty of good accommodation nearby. Why not get a group of you together and drive up to Wooler, or indeed hire a mini bus!

Joyce Watts

Regional Treasurer's Report

The review of the Celebration of 25 years of U3A event held at New College Durham on 19th July 2007 (sent to all U3A's in Northumbria Region) included my preliminary summary of the financial element of the event. After the payment of some late bills I can report that the final surplus was £1420.74. This arose mainly because of the much larger than expected attendance of U3A members at the event.

The Region Committee have decided that this sum will be used to part-fund future one- or two-day events to be held in the Region by a local U3A or a group of U3A's.

Len Cline

Area Trustee Report January 2008.

Extraordinary General Meeting

Probably the most important news is that an Extraordinary General Meeting is to be held on Thursday 22nd May at the Birmingham & Midland Institute at 1:30pm. Tea and coffee will be available but no lunch will be provided. It is close to the station but there is no parking available. Proxy voting will be accepted so if you are not planning to attend please use your proxy vote.

The next Chairman's letter will give more details. I would like to see this item on the Agenda for our next Regional Meeting.

National Conference

This year it will be held in Swansea from September 6th to 9th with a theme of *The complete University – a celebration of diversity*. The AGM itself will be on Monday 8th September. It would be good to have a motion or two from the North East!

Travel Network

The National Travel network has now been disbanded. We are also aware that some U3A's have been arranging trips and holidays which have potentially placed the organiser in the role of a tour operator, under the terms of the Group Package Travel Regulations 1992 for which there is no cover in place. Shortly all U3A's will be covered by the Tour Operators Insurance for all holidays and trips they plan to lead within Great Britain and mainland Europe. Once this scheme has been announced officially then contact National Office if you need clarification.

U3A News.

The time is coming for us to renew our direct mailing subscriptions.

You will see in the latest edition inside the back cover an advertisement for someone to support the work of the National Education and Development Officer otherwise known as Mike Long.

It has been appreciated for some time that Mike has too much work to cope with on his own and this is initially a part time post which is likely to grow over time. Although the advertisement says that there will need to be regular attendance at National Office in Bromley the position is not based there. This is a first step into acknowledging that we need to provide more resource to the organisation.

The NEC (National Executive Committee) is currently looking at the resources that may well be required in the Regions in the near future particularly bearing in mind that most Regions/Areas are not as well organised as the North East.

Publicity

Barbara Lewis is encouraging us to make March National Awareness Month again. There are no plans laid out but hope that each U3A will make a concerted effort during March to make people aware of our movement.

She also points out that although last year was the 25th Anniversary of the U3A in the UK, this year is the 25th Anniversary of the Third Age Trust and she is hoping that U3A's will consider Heritage Celebrations for themselves. She is also asking us to use the National website (www.u3a.org.uk) to publicise any events or celebrations we might be planning.

Group Leaders Handbook

The Standing Committee for education has produced a Group Leaders Handbook which they hope will be given to each group leader in order to help them with their role. If anyone would like to see a copy before it is published, contact me.

Summer Schools

I have received some caustic comments about the Summer school being held in Telford this year being described as in the "North". It has been suggested by someone in the Region that we should organise one in the real North. There would be considerable support for this within the NEC. If anyone is interested in such a project – would you like to talk to me about it?

Finally

You may remember that Gateshead U3A requested that the following should be put on the NEC Agenda

"that U3A's should act as an apolitical pressure group for problems experienced with travel bookings and insurance and driving age etc., and Whickham suggested that there should be some recognition of the Advanced Driving Qualification."

It was on the Agenda for the December meeting but unfortunately due to problems with the trains I did not get there. The Board acknowledged the request and pointed out that National Office is continually negotiating with Insurance Companies on our behalf and the NEC itself takes every opportunity to present the case for our members in meetings with Government Departments which are becoming more and more frequent. Always contact National Office if you require advice on these matters.

The matter of the Advanced Driving qualification is a matter for individual members and perhaps the Institute of Advanced motorists

John Leiper

Sic!

The New York Times recently included an article on hospital noise: "Hospital hallways are often the source of a cacophony of seemingly unavoidable noises: beeping monitors, squeaky medication and meal carts, blaring intercoms, late-night conversations between nurses and patients. It's the squeaky medication which always drives me nuts!



Hump Day Be thankful that it's over for this week. Hump day? It's Wednesday, the middle of the working week, the day on which you begin to feel it's all downhill to the weekend. It's one of the more slangy entries in the new edition of the Collins Australian Dictionary, which came out on a, yes, Wednesday. When I was working (seems a long time ago now) my work colleagues and I would identify the hump as about 10:00 a.m. on a Monday, that made it easier to handle the rest of the week, all downhill till Friday. Ah well! small things...



On a positive note...

I've learned that no matter what happens, or how bad it seems today, life does go on, and it will be better tomorrow.

I've learned that you can tell a lot about a person by the way he/she handles these three things: a rainy day, lost luggage, and tangled Christmas tree lights.

I've learned that regardless of your relationship with your parents, you'll miss them when they're gone from your life.

I've learned that making a "living" is not the same thing as making a "life." I've learned that life sometimes gives you a second chance.

I've learned that you shouldn't go through life just being a doormat. You need to be able to throw something back.

I've learned that whenever I decide something with an open heart, I usually make the right decision.

I've learned that even when I have pains, I don't have to be one.

I've learned that every day you should reach out and touch someone. People love a warm hug, or just a friendly pat on the back.

I've learned that I still have a lot to learn.

I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but **people will never forget how you made them feel.**



Some reasons why it's great to be British

Only in Britain can a pizza get to your house faster than an ambulance.

Only in Britain do supermarkets make sick people walk all the way to the back of the shop to get their prescriptions while healthy people can buy cigarettes at the front.

Only in Britain do people order double cheeseburgers, a large portion of chips, and a DIET coke.

Only in Britain do banks leave both doors open and chain the pens to the counters.

Only in Britain do we leave cars worth thousands of pounds on the drive and lock our junk and cheap lawn mower in the garage.

Only in Britain do we use answering machines to screen calls and then have call waiting so we won't miss a call

Only in Britain are there disabled parking places in front of a skating rink.



Advertising

This is from an advertisement for Micrografix Graph Plus, a tool for preparing graphs and charts for computer presentations.

In today's world, the first step to success is often just getting noticed. Which is no small affair when you consider that all it takes to produce a professional presentation these days is a personal computer.

Apparently you don't need solid facts or good ideas, just a personal computer!

Do we really need roads?

The Department of Transport has revealed a plan to widen the M6 south of Manchester by one lane in each direction and this is expected to cost more than £57m a mile, or about £1,000 an inch.

Phenomenal Woman

When I was in my younger days, I weighed a few pounds less,
I needn't hold my tummy in to wear a belted dress.
But now that I am older, I've set my body free;
There's comfort of elastic where once my waist would be.
Inventor of those high-heeled shoes my feet have not forgiven;
I have to wear a nine now, but used to wear a seven.

And how about those blasted tights -- they're sized by weight, you see,
So how come when I put them on the crotch is at my knee?
I need to wear these glasses as the print's been getting smaller;
And it wasn't very long ago I know that I was taller.
Though my hair has turned to grey and my skin no longer fits,
On the inside, I'm the same old me, but the outside's changed a bit.

Anonymous



That Typographical Error

Old-time printers used to recite or sing this heartfelt doggerel:

*The typographical error is a slippery thing and sly
You can hunt til you are dizzy, but it somehow will get by.
Til the forms are off the presses, it is strange how still it keeps.
It shrinks down in a corner and it never stirs or peeps.
That typographical error, too small for human eyes.
Til the ink is on the paper, when it grows to mountain size.
The boss, he stares with horror, then he grabs his hair and groans.
The copyreader drops his head upon his hands and moans.
The remainder of the issue may be clean as clean can be,
But the typographical error is the only thing you see.*

That was back in the days when a printer had to set every word by hand, carefully picking out each metal letter one at a time from a box of two cases (hence the terms upper and lower case). "There was a convenient belief among printers that there was a special devil in every print-shop.

"At night, or when the printer was not watching, this pesky demon would invert letters, mizspell a word or perhaps remove an entire or even a complete line... Mistakes were inevitable, and the printer's devil took the blame."

Probably the first and one of the worst typographical errors occurred in 1631, when printers of what is now known as the "wicked" bible were fined 300 pounds sterling. In printing the Ten Commandments, they had

omitted the vital word "not" so that the verse read "Thou shalt commit adultery." A thousand copies were ordered to be destroyed, but a few survived. Today they're worth tens of thousands of pounds to collectors. In the old days, a printer's devil was the name given to the newest apprentice in a print shop, the unfortunate lad who had to do all the odd jobs, ending the day with ink all over his hands, face and clothes. Perhaps he scattered a lot of those typos in revenge!



Of all noises, I think music is the least disagreeable
Samuel Johnson (1709- 1784)

My music is best understood by children and animals
Igor Stravinsky (1882- 1971)

Music expresses that which cannot be put into words and that which cannot remain silent
Victor Hugo (1802-1885)



The sentence: 'The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog' uses every letter of the alphabet.

Pangram (Greek: pan gramma, "every letter") or holoalphabetic sentence is a piece of text which uses every letter of the alphabet. Most pangrams are short, usually a single sentence. Today, pangrams are frequently used to display typefaces.

One of the best known pangrams is used by most people and is:

The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog

However, this pangram is far from perfect. It contains three e's, four o's two r's, two t's, and two u's.

Other pangrams are:

Pack my box with five dozen liquor jugs.

Just keep examining every low bid quoted for zinc etchings.

Quick jigs for waltz vex bad nymph.

Astronaut Quincy B. Zack defies gravity with six jet fuel pumps, and

The five boxing wizards jump quickly.



Can you read these correctly?

1. The bandage was wound around the wound.
2. The farm was used to produce produce.
3. The dump was so full that it had to refuse more refuse.
4. We must polish the Polish furniture
5. He could lead if he would get the lead out.
6. The soldier decided to desert his dessert in the desert.
7. Since there is no time like the present, he thought it was time to present the present.
8. A bass was painted on the head of the bass drum.
9. When shot at, the dove dove into the bushes.
10. I did not object to the object.
11. The insurance was invalid for the invalid.
12. There was a row among the oarsmen about how to row.
13. They were too close to the door to close it.
14. The buck does funny things when the does are present.
15. A seamstress and a sewer fell down into a sewer line.
16. To help with planting, the farmer taught his sow to sow.
17. The wind was too strong to wind the sail.
18. Upon seeing the tear in the painting I shed a tear.
19. I had to subject the subject to a series of tests.
20. How can I intimate this to my most intimate friend?

That's all Folks!