



CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

Decisions Decisions

Well at long last we now have a date for the EU referendum. The gloves are off and no doubt we will be hearing a great deal from the protagonists of both sides. I hope what we will get over the next four months will be balanced constructive debate rather than emotional hot air. Whatever the result we can only hope that it turns out to be the best for the United Kingdom. We have a very important decision to make

At a local level we have our own decisions to make when **we have our AGM on the 18th April**. I hope that by then we will have a new committee champing at the bit to get underway. Since my "cri de coeur" message to you earlier this month I am pleased to say that we have received expressions of interest regarding the vacant positions for the new committee. However so far no one has come forward for the roles of Chairman and Vice Chairman.* Although a U3A could operate without a Vice Chairman, it clearly cannot do this without a Chairman. Until someone volunteers for this role the future of Dawlish U3A is in doubt. I am still hopeful that we will be able to fill both of these roles but time is running out. So if you are interested in either of these positions please contact me asap and I will be happy to explain the role of more detail. I would also like to stress that I would be pleased to provide support to whoever takes on these roles both before and beyond the AGM.

I don't know how many of you read "Third Age Matters". Personally I read it from cover to cover and I find its content to be extremely interesting. I particularly enjoy readers' letters. It is interesting to read about what other groups do but also just as interesting to read members' views. Some of you will no doubt recall the cover photograph of a previous edition which featured two U3A members in themed French boxer shorts. One lady wrote an angry letter stating that she did not want to see this kind of thing on the front cover of the magazine. This elicited several equally angry letters in reply. It appears that the two gentlemen concerned were posing for the September photo of a calendar shoot in aid of prostate cancer. One of them leads the French conversation group, hence the theme. Apparently they have sold nearly 300 calendars which is quite an achievement. But was it in poor taste as one lady claimed, or just honest good fun? Most correspondents thought the latter but a minority disagreed strongly. Well everyone is entitled to their opinion. However what I can assure my French conversation group is that I will not be aiming to emulate these brave and imaginative guys. I am sure the group will breathe a sigh of relief about that!

*Please note that I have used the term "Chairman" to mean both female and male. "Chairperson" sounds too coy and awkward and "Chair" is a best known as a piece of furniture. I hope this does not offend anyone

Steve Thomson (Chairman– Dawlish U3A)

NEW MEMBERS

A very warm welcome is extended to all new members who have joined Dawlish U3A since January. We hope to see you at our monthly meetings, when you can find out more about the Interest Groups and meet other members in an informal, social setting.

MONTHLY MEETINGS

These are held in the Hall at the rear of the Methodist Church, Brunswick Place, Dawlish, commencing at 2.00 pm. A charge of £1.00 is made to include refreshments. Non-members are also invited to join us for a 'taster session', and will be assured of a warm welcome.

Our February speaker – Barry Behenna – gave us an interesting insight into the work undertaken by the Patient Participation Group serving the interests of patients at Barton Surgery, Dawlish. Group members include volunteer patients, the practice manager and a GP from the practice. They meet on a regular basis to discuss the services on offer, and how improvements can be made for the benefit of patients and the practice. If you are registered with the surgery and are interested in finding out more about the group, contact the surgery on 01626 888877.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

21 March	Dr Janet Cutler "Royal Trains"
18 April	Dawlish U3A AGM
16 May	Janet Downer "Dark Deeds in Devon"

SUMMARY OF CURRENT INTEREST GROUPS

INTEREST GROUP	DAY/ TIME	INTEREST GROUP	DAY/ TIME
Art Appreciation Margaret Noel	2nd Monday 2.00 to 4.00 pm	Literature/Book reading Janet Feltham	3 rd Friday 10.30 – 12 noon
Creative Writing Barbara Lindley	4 th Monday 10.30 – 12.30	Music Appreciation Ian Thomson	3 rd Wednesday 10.30 onwards
DFYT Travel Group Linda Studley	3 rd Monday 12 noon at Rendezvous Cafe	Play Reading Jan Ravens	3 rd Tuesday 1.30 – 3.30
French Conversation Steve Thomson	3rd Thursday 10.30 – 12.30	Strollers (Social Walking 3 – 4 miles) Margaret Cunningham	2nd Thursday From 1.30 PM
Gardens and Gateaux Pauline Dean	Variable during Spring/summer	Scrabble George Lipscomb	First Monday 2.00 pm
German Conversation Ian Thomson	2nd & 4 th Sunday 3 – 5 pm	Travel Ann Leigh	variable
Great Lives Angela Morgan	4 th Friday 2.00 – 4.00		

WANT TO JOIN A GROUP?

If you are interested in joining any of the Groups please get in touch with the co-ordinator/contact member, or e-mail me and I will pass on your details. If the Group is full then your name will be added to the waiting list. There is always the option of starting a second Group with other members who are also on the waiting list, and the Committee welcome ideas from members for new Interest Groups.

Pauline Dean (Groups' Co-ordinator) (01626 437815 – email pauline.dean@talk21.com)

The ethos of the U3A is to share knowledge, skills and experience, so if you have a suggestion for a new Group please don't feel that by coming forward you will be expected to 'be in charge of the class'. The U3A Trust has a library of resources available and a strong network of regional advisers who can offer support to new groups.

INTEREST GROUP NEWS

Gardens & Gateaux

The 2016 edition of the National Gardens Scheme 'yellow book' is now available, and within a short driving distance there are 11 gardens opening for the scheme from May until mid September. A get-together to discuss and plan this year's programme of visits will be held on Tuesday 5th April at 2.30 pm. Contact Pauline Dean (01626 437815) for more details.

Travel Group

We had a very successful visit to Bristol on February 6th, and everyone enjoyed the opportunity of seeing the SS Great Britain and also a sightseeing bus tour of the city. We picked up ideas for future U3A trips out.

Our next trip is to Exeter on Wednesday 9th March, for the Red Coat guided tour of Cathedral Close and the Bishop's Garden. Then in April we will visit Greenway to see the Spring flowers. This was originally planned for April 8th but I have been asked to change it to Friday 15th as this is a more convenient date for others. We will travel by rail to Paignton and then steam train, with a shuttle bus to the house itself. Full details will be available at the next U3A meeting on 21st March, or contact Ann Leigh (01626 864907) email panleigh@gmail.com

NEW GROUP

A Scrabble Group is being formed and will have its inaugural meeting on Monday, 7th March, from 2.00 PM at the home of the Group Leader, George Lipscomb, at 6 Town Mills, Church Street, Dawlish, EX7 9QP.

It is envisaged that each session will last approximately 2 hours: sufficient for two games with a refreshment break at half time. At club level Scrabble is just a game, and the aim is to have fun and socialise; so don't worry if you don't have a scrabble set, or indeed if you have never played before. Either way you will be just as welcome.

If you wish to join the group or require further information, and haven't already given George your contact details, please contact him at lipscomb@gmx.co.uk or on 01626 862810

ITEMS FOR NEXT NEWSLETTER

Please send in contributions for inclusion in the next edition by **3rd May 2016**.

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