



Newsletter No. 13 MAY-JULY 2016

FROM THE (NEW) CHAIR

By way of introduction, I was born in County Durham but joined the Royal Navy through Dartmouth in 1946 and so began my adoption into the West Country. I trained as an Engineer in Plymouth and also lived there; but I left the navy in 1970 to become a teacher. After 19 years in that role, finishing as Headteacher. I retired 27 years ago and lived in South East Cornwall where I kept my boat and cruised extensively from the Baltic to the Balearics and out to the Azores.

I moved initially to Dawlish in 2009 but moved back to the family home in Aston Clinton, Buckinghamshire, to assist with terminal care for my father-in-law. Whilst there, I joined the local U3A, which for a village of 4000, mustered 30 groups, and had to limit its membership to 250 (the capacity of the village hall.) It was obviously a well established U3A and its success attracted members from Aylesbury and the region. Of course such a large membership generated sufficient funds to enable us to recruit a high calibre of speakers at our monthly meetings. The largest participation in group activities was in: History, Science and Technology, and Wildlife; with groups of up to 40.

You should all be aware of the challenges that face the existence of the Dawlish U3A: a small membership attempting to impose itself in a town which already has several long standing and diverse interest groups; and consequently the problem of attracting new members. Apathy and pessimism will not ensure our U3A's survival. We need to advertise our services better, and I'm very hopeful that the re-structured website, thanks to the generous donation of £250 from Dawlish Town Council will go a long way to facilitate this. We also need to offer additional interest groups.

At the AGM suggestions were invited for new groups. I offered History (but not in conflict with Dawlish Local History Society); and both then and subsequently Ballroom Dancing, Bird Watching, Philosophy and Board Games have all been mooted. If you are prepared to participate in any of these, be a group leader, or propose another group please contact me. I could add that I was an enthusiastic member of the Aston Clinton Science & Technology Group; but my engineering experience is more than a century old! I qualified in Steam, Gunnery and Radio. Steam is now confined to power generation, gunnery has given way to guided missiles (and hopefully of limited appeal to our U3A), and in radio thermionic valves have been superseded by semiconductors. However, I mention that particular group as evidence as to how with dynamic leadership members may be introduced to a topic they probably would never have considered.

It is not all doom and gloom. One thing that immediately struck me when I attended my first monthly meeting of Dawlish U3A was the welcome I received, and the relative calm of the meeting compared to the raucous, standing room only, meetings at Aston Clinton. We should build on that and encourage new members. Remember that anyone interested is welcome to attend either the monthly meeting, or any group meeting (subject to availability of space) for one taster session. (For reasons of insurance attendance beyond one taster session has to be restricted to members only).

NEW MEMBERS

A very warm welcome is extended to all new members who have joined Dawlish U3A since March. 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.

NEW COMMITTEE - Elected at the AGM held on 18th April 2016

Officers

Chairman	George Lipscomb
Vice Chairman	Steve Thomson
Secretary	Angela Morgan
Treasurer	Phil Roberts

Members

Membership Secretary	Elisabeth Thomson
Webmaster	Ian Thomson
Minutes Secretary	Karen Flowers (co-opted)

The role of Groups' Co-ordinator will be undertaken by Ian and Elisabeth Thomson.

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 speakers for the next few months will be:

16 May Janet Downer "Dark Deeds in Devon"

20th June Susan Tribble - "The British Red Cross" – national and international work.

18th July Magistrates - The Courts, cases and a little wit!

INTEREST GROUP NEWS

Don't Forget Your Toothbrush Travel Group - are now booking for their next few events:

Monday 9th May to Friday 13th May. The warmth and charm of YORKSHIRE. Staying at the Britannia Hotel, Leeds. DB&B. Excursions every day, including York, Haworth, Skipton and Emmerdale Country, "Last of the Summer Wine" Country and Leeds. Calling at Stratford Upon Avon on our journey to Yorkshire. The cost is £199.99 per person with a £60 single room supplement.

Day trip to LYNTON and LYNMOUTH on 30th May. travelling with Grey Cars. £21.00 per person

Monday 22nd August to Friday 26th August. THE COTSWOLDS Staying at the Britannia Hotel, Coventry. DB&B. Excursions include Stratford upon Avon, Warwick Castle, Leamington Spa, Bourton on the Water, Stow on the Wold and Cheltenham. The cost is £179.99 per person with a possible single room supplement.

We would love you to join us. Contact Linda Studley 01626 888844

Gardens & Gateaux Group

A full programme of garden visits has been arranged by members of the Group, using the National Gardens Scheme 'yellow book' as a guide to local gardens open during the summer months.



The picture was taken during our first outing, which was to Haldon Grange, Dunchideock on 23rd April. Spectacular azaleas, camellias and rhododendrons, specimen trees, lake and waterfall – and we chose a day of glorious spring sunshine to enjoy it, plus very nice cake! The gardens are open throughout the summer months, with the promise of a fine display of roses, wisteria and the new lilac maze, so definitely worth another visit. If you would like a copy of the programme please contact Pauline Dean (pauline.dean@talk21.com). The next visit is on Saturday 14th May – Tor View, Highweek, Newton Abbot – meet at the garden at 2.00 pm.

Great Lives Group

In April Valerie told us about the restoration of Brunel's Pumping Station at Starcross and how she and her husband turned it into a museum and visitor centre which ran successfully for ten years. Next month we shall hear about Madam Blavatsky. New members welcome, contact Angela Morgan - tandadawlish@gmail.com

Travel Group

Ann Leigh is stepping down from organising the day trips for this Group, due to other commitments. If anyone would be interested in talking over please contact the Groups' Co-ordinator.

WEBSITE UPDATE

A successful bid for funding by Heather Roche and Ian Thomson has resulted in the award of a £250 grant by Dawlish Town Council, which will be put towards the cost of re-designing the website – check it out on www.u3a.dawlish.info. Please submit photos and 'write-ups' of what your Group has been doing, and make the website both dynamic and reflective of current activities within groups. Contributions should be sent by email to Ian Thomson (Webmaster) ianthomson633@btinternet.com

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. 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.

SUMMARY OF CURRENT INTEREST GROUPS

INTEREST GROUP	DAY/ TIME	INTEREST GROUP	DAY/ TIME
Art Appreciation No co-ordinator at present	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) Jean Gittisham	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 No co-ordinator at present	variable
Great Lives Angela Morgan	4 th Friday 2.00 – 4.00		

RENEWAL REMINDER

The annual membership for Dawlish U3A is £15.00, and this was due for renewal at the AGM on 18th April. If you were not able to attend, you can pay at the next monthly meeting (16th May) or contact Elisabeth Thomson (Membership Secretary) on 01626 867363 for details or where to send your cheque.

NOT ON E-MAIL?

A very small number of members do not have Internet Access, and a copy of the Newsletter is available for them to collect at the monthly meeting. However, the new Committee have agreed that on receipt of a Stamped Addressed Envelope the Newsletter will be posted out to those members who do not have an e-mail address, and who are not able to attend the monthly meetings. Please contact the Membership Secretary if you would like to have your Newsletter posted to you.

ITEMS FOR NEXT NEWSLETTER

Please send in contributions for inclusion in the next edition by **28th July 2016**.

Pauline Dean - Newsletter Editor (e-mail pauline.dean@talk21.com)