

# Yorkshire & Humber BULLETIN November 2020



## Notes from the Chair

Having been Acting Chair of the YAHR for 16 months, I was elected as Chair at this year's much delayed AGM in September. It has been agreed that we should hold next year's AGM on the regular date of Wednesday, 28<sup>th</sup> April, either virtually or face to face.

My immediate plan is to try and get things back on track as and when the situation allows.

The Management Team is actively planning to resume workshops initially virtually and when the situation allows it, face to face. If you have a topic you would like us to cover, please contact me.

It is planned to hold:

- Chair and Secretary workshop
- New trustees' workshop
- Treasurers' workshop

Details will be circulated to Chairs & Secretaries in due course.

During the course of the year we welcomed Margaret Fiddes as YAHR Regional Organiser for Publicity. However there was a changing of The Guard as we said farewell to our Regional Trustee, Sue Stokes, at the Third Age Trust AGM as her term of office came to an end. Margaret put herself forward as the Trustee for Yorkshire and the Humber and was elected at the National AGM. We then welcomed Helen Leech of Whitby Whaler U3A to be our Regional Organiser for Publicity. We wish Sue the very best for the future. She will be a hard act to follow but we are sure that Margaret will rise to the challenge.

The YAHR website provides a link to all U3As in the region. Please could I make a plea to ensure that all your websites are up to date.

A reminder that the U3A Office Newsletter is available by signing up on the U3A Office website homepage or by clicking on the highlighted link [monthly national newsletter](#)

**YAHR email list.** Please encourage your members, group leaders and committee members to join our emailing list to be kept in touch with the workshops, study days and other events that our region is organising. See [yahru3a.co.uk](http://yahru3a.co.uk) Home page, scroll down and click on 'News Sign-Up.'

**Why not join our Management Team?** – a warm welcome awaits you. If you are stepping down from your own committee, please bring your interest and experience to the YAHR Team – it's a lively, open, engaged team of u3a enthusiasts! Contact [chair@yahru3a.co.uk](mailto:chair@yahru3a.co.uk)

**U3A on YouTube:** The official YouTube channel of the U3A in the UK is u3a youtube - for more information please look at the National website, [www.u3a.org.uk](http://www.u3a.org.uk) or directly on the link <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCrCq8qYDZ4U24Iq0J4qx0fQ>

This is the first bulletin since February 2020 and quite a lot has happened since then! Many of our constituent U3As will have had an AGM, most having had to take place virtually via zoom, so there will be some new faces as Chairs, Secretaries and Committee members. Similarly, our Management Team has been refreshed since our online AGM in September, so we will start by introducing ourselves, who we are and what we do.

## **OUR REGION**

The YAHR comprises 52 U3As – a full list can be found on the website, <https://yahru3a.co.uk> As the region is so large, some regional networks have been set up, these are: The Humber Accord; Westnet; The Dales; East Coast. Some of these networks have their own websites; further information can be found on the YAHR website.

## **THE MANAGEMENT TEAM**

| <b>Position in Team</b>  | <b>Name</b>         | <b>U3A</b>          |
|--------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Chairman                 | Mick Richings       | Craven              |
| Admin. Secretary         | Hazel Ward          | Swanland            |
| Treasurer                | Janet Matthews      | Leeds               |
| Regional Trustee         | Margaret Fiddes     | Sherburn & Villages |
| Events Administrator     | Samina Aslam        | Sheffield           |
| Public Relations Advisor | Helen Leech         | Whitby Whaler       |
| Learning Networks        | Angie Grain         | Ilkley & District   |
| Beacon Coordinator       | Frank Bailey        | Ripon               |
| Web Manager              | Neil Stevens        | Ilkley & District   |
| Speaker Directory        | Beryl Pemberton     | Bedale              |
| CEAC *                   | Sue Stokes          | Barnsley            |
| Member                   | Hugh Bevington      | Ilkley & District   |
| Member                   | Trevor Barrowcliffe | Whitby Whaler       |
| Member                   | Pat Collard         | Cottingham          |

\* Communications and External Affairs Committee (of the National U3A)

### **Regional Trustee** *Margaret Fiddes*

Well I'm here! Following on from our valued and excellent Regional Trustee Sue Stokes I find myself the new incumbent. It's only a month or so and I'm still finding my feet. There's a lot to take on both in the region and across the wider Third Age Trust. The YAHR team have been a great support in my first weeks and I am sure I'm going to enjoy working with them.

#### **Recruitment:**

One of the things I was involved with before I took on the trustee role was the Recruitment Working Party. The aim is to support U3As to recruit new members. With an ageing membership and a slow decline in renewals across the UK it was important to come up with some strategies to recruit new, younger members. That is more important than ever now as Covid19 has led to a slow down in renewals and in some areas a considerable loss of members.

In our region Howden, Drifffield, Easingwold and Ilkley U3As have joined a group of 62 U3As who are trialling a toolkit, which we hope will be useful for U3As to run their own successful campaigns in 2021.

**Gettting to Know You:**

As Regional Trustee I hope to represent your views to the Third Age Trust as well as making a useful contribution to the development and the direction of the movement, and so it's important that I know how U3As and members feel.

Under normal circumstances I would be asking if I could come and see you and making a point of meeting all our Yorkshire & Humberside U3As. That's simply not possible at the moment but I have been able to meet a few people by Zoom. Hopefully sooner rather than later I will be able to get out there and say hello in person.

Meantime it really is tremendous to see all the activities and groups meeting on line and in small groups where they can and working hard to stay in touch with members. The true spirit of the U3A is its can do attitude and it's why I love the U3A.

To get in touch with Margaret please email [margaret.fiddes@u3a.org.uk](mailto:margaret.fiddes@u3a.org.uk)

**Public Relations Adviser Helen Leech**

A new Brand!

Have you registered onto the new U3A brand centre? It's an absolute must! Log onto [u3abrand.org.uk](http://u3abrand.org.uk) and instructions will be given on how to gain access. Once registered its recommended checking out the brand centre guided walk through video. In the coming weeks more stock will be added but for the moment it's possible to browse through the offer with the new messages and imagery. In the future banners, posters and other publicity materials will be available to personalise and order for the use of your U3A. The Annual report, Brand guidelines Budget and Development Plan are currently accessible.

As the new Yorkshire and Humberside Region, PR and Marketing lead, I want to encourage Trustees and members from across the region to work together to spread the word to friends and neighbours, as well as help the U3A to reach out to a more diverse demographic. Joining the U3A can change lives as we are well aware. Recently I mentioned the U3A to a very elderly housebound friend, she then couldn't say enough about how important it had been to her and her husband over a 40 year period and how grateful she was that a neighbour had told her about the U3A, when she moved to the area. We are so privileged to be in a position to let others know about this incredible organisation and to help change lives for the better. I would love to hear any U3A news that you would be happy to share.

To get in touch with Helen email on [hcleech@aol.com](mailto:hcleech@aol.com)

A woman who was arrested for tippexing out all the full stops in a library book was told she can expect a long sentence

**With all the sadness and trauma going on in the world at this moment, it is worth reflecting on the death of a very important person which almost went unnoticed. Larry LaPrise, the man who wrote 'The Hokey Cokey', died peacefully aged 93.**

**The most traumatic part for his family was getting him into the coffin.**

**They put his left leg in. Then the trouble started.....**

## **WHAT WE DO**

Our overall aim is to bring U3As in our region together by sharing ideas and experiences. Our activities and events can be divided into BC and AC (before Covid and after Covid!).

### **Workshops**

Before Covid we ran a number of workshops, the most recent being “Sharing good ideas” in November 2019, and a Treasurers’ workshop in February 2020.

In the “Good ideas” workshop delegates were able to hear about a project in Ilkley for U3A members to help young readers in schools; the benefits of “walking sports”; the responsibilities of being a membership secretary, and the latest information about the Beacon system. However one of the most important aspects of such workshops is the informal conversations which take place between members of various U3A over coffee and lunch.

The Treasurers’ workshop covered advice on: handling money; managing bank accounts; preparing annual accounts; venue hire; paying speakers; gift aid, and the use of the Beacon system for accounting.

### **Summer School**

The YAHR Summer School took place in July 2019 and was very successful, with 96 U3A Members, including some day delegates as well as the majority of residential delegates. The event ran over 3 days and Some of the workshops on offer included; Climate Change; Jewellery Making; Painting; The Philosopher; Literature & Art History. It was planned to make the summer school an annual event, but our plans for the summer of 2020 were scuppered by the coronavirus epidemic. We hope that we will be able to run a summer school in 2021, but obviously this will depend on the situation with the epidemic.

### **Captain Cook Event**

Unfortunately this 3-day event, planned and hosted by Whitby Whaler U3A for June this year, had to be cancelled, like so many other events, because of the coronavirus epidemic. It is hoped to run the event next summer, but as with the summer school this will depend on the epidemic situation.

## **U3A DAY**

Like so many other events, the National U3A Day planed for June 3rd had to be cancelled – it is hoped that it will take place in June 2021, check the National website.

### **Since Covid**

As the coronavirus epidemic has put paid to live meetings the Management Team have been meeting once a month on zoom. Advice has also been circulated to U3As about organising AGMs and Group meetings on zoom. All our workshops have been cancelled, and depending on how long the ban on live meetings continues, we are contemplating running some workshops on zoom. If you have any thoughts on this, or other ideas for regional activities online, please contact the Chairman on [mick.richings@btinternet.com](mailto:mick.richings@btinternet.com)

## **News from roundabout the Region**

In future Bulletins we would like to include some news from individual U3As, especially how you have been coping with the lockdown periods and restrictions on live meetings. It should be stressed that this is not a competition to find the U3As organising the most zoom meetings – some U3As may have preferred to keep in contact with their members in other ways, and during the summer some groups may have been meeting in the open air. Also we would like to hear how you have been meeting the challenge of persuading your members to rejoin when there are hardly any live meetings. Obviously with 52 U3As we could only include a few at a time, but we would really like to hear from you.

Please contact Trevor Barrowcliffe, the Bulletin editor with any contributions from your U3A, on [twbarrowcliffe@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:twbarrowcliffe@yahoo.co.uk)

To start the ball rolling here are a few reports from U3As represented by members of the Management Team.

## **Swanland**

*Keeping U3A Members Connected, In-Touch and Learning...*

We began by having zoomed Committee meetings and eventually our AGM on Zoom – both were very successful. As interest gathered pace we reintroduced our regular weekly lectures on zoom together with a weekly 2 hour 'Drop In'. This is where all members can 'drop in' to chat with each other about whatever they want. Also by using the 'Breakout Rooms' facility that comes with the pro account friends can meet for a confidential chat.

We put two new areas onto our website, the first being 'Creations'. For this we invited members to submit accounts including photographs and videos of any creative activity that helped them get through the first lockdown. The response was amazing! The activities included quilt and model making; gardening; training assistance dogs; painting and creative writing. For the second lockdown which coincided with autumn and winter we began 'Discovery', a space where some of our convenors contributed 'Beginners Guides' to their subjects so that any member wishing to take up a new hobby or interest could immediately access advice – our guides include: How to view a picture; Family History and Wine Tasting. Both areas are ongoing and our next project is to set up an advice page on computer Apps.

*John Munson*

## **Sherburn & Villages**

We are continuing with a host of online groups who are singing, wine tasting, reading, learning languages, crafting, playing games, flower arranging and running quizzes. Taking advantage of as much technology as we can we're using Zoom, WhatsApp and YouTube - as well as meeting in person where it was possible. Before Lockdown 2 the cyclists and walkers headed off (socially distanced of course) and now the walking group is running a buddy system walking 2 at a time. Monthly meetings are going online and we have had a very successful AGM via Zoom thanks to the Chair and the Business Secretary, who worked to ensure all went smoothly.

*Margaret Fiddes*

## Whitby Whaler

Since the beginning of the pandemic, like U3A members across the country, many Whitby Whaler members have had to minimise social contact, so it has been important to find ways of keeping things happening, in order to prevent loneliness and maintain health. Support has been offered to use Zoom and a number of Volunteer leaders have continued to run their activities virtually rather than face to face. Members have had the opportunity to participate in anything from Egyptology to Singalongs and Family History to Jazz Appreciation.

The Whalers are now enjoying a busy Autumn, the schedule includes a variety of over thirty Zoom and in person groups and has included a series of evening talks on Captain Cook, as well as activities such as World Cinema, Wine and Whine, Book Club, Paint and Prattle, Music Appreciation and so much more. Prior to the second lockdown Exercise/ Dance groups, Play Reading, and Photography were being held in Covid secure venues. Walkers and Kite Flyers have also been out and about! Throughout this period members have been kept informed through a regular and lengthy newsletter full of ideas of things to keep everyone occupied, including puzzles, jokes and a variety of articles.

*Helen Leech*

***And finally.....*** Lectures have always been popular in most U3A and many have continued organising them online. However not everyone is so keen to go to lectures, as illustrated by the following episode...

Ron Chestna 89 years of age was stopped by the police around 2 a.m. and was asked where he was going at that time of night.

Ron replied, "I'm on my way to a lecture about alcohol abuse and the effects it has on the human body, as well as smoking and staying out late."

The officer asked, "Really? Who's giving that lecture at this time of night?"

Ron replied, "That would be my wife."



*Acknowledgments to Clair Stones of Whitby Whaler U3A for the jokes.*