

# u3a Newsletter

May 2023

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[u3a.org.uk](https://u3a.org.uk)



## Introduction from Sam Mauger

Dear members,

**Another month filled with great u3a ideas and events.** The newsletter is a great way to share monthly news across the movement easily and if you know a member who doesn't already receive it, please ask them if they would like to sign up.

We have a lot to be proud of in the movement and this edition highlights Hadrian's Wall. This was a collaborative event for u3as to come together in person and online to learn, explore and have time in each other's company. **Working to support the movement is a dedicated team of expert staff members and expert u3a volunteers who work alongside the 1,000 inspirational u3as to make this movement the great place it is – a place where members can forge friendships and participate in new interests.**

Over the last six years we have worked hard to develop our communication channels to engage u3a members and beyond. We thank the communication teams and volunteers who consistently work to spread the u3a word. **This newsletter with its u3a-led content and readership of over 40,000 members and friends is a great example of that.**

I wish you a happy and enjoyable month ahead.

With very best wishes

Sam Mauger

CEO of the Third Age Trust

## News from the Trust

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### Hundreds of u3a members celebrate learning at Hadrian's Wall Event

Over 180 members attended Off the Wall, our festival of learning which took place at Hadrian's Wall. Members connected through circle dancing, charcoal drawing, creative writing, traditional cookery demonstrations and lectures from

academics from Newcastle University. Members also took part online with a diverse programme of events that enabled people from all across the country to connect together through learning.

Ann Keating, one of the organisers of the event, says "The whole idea was to raise awareness of the u3a and to bring u3as together as a family."



### Postcards from Hadrian's Wall

We are thrilled to announce the winners of our 'Off the Wall' postcard competition.

Congratulations to Valerie from Camberley u3a, and to our runners up, Tania from Washington Village u3a and Chris from Syston & District u3a (pictured.) Thank you to everyone who entered – the entries showcased the creativity and talent within the u3a movement.

### u3a News

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### 25 Celebrations for 25 Years of Changers Ford u3a

Changers Ford u3a went all out for their 25th anniversary, with 25 celebrations including a celebratory poem, special commemorative bookmarks, and quizzes.

25 post box toppers were created and displayed around town which showcased the range of groups at Changers Ford u3a.

Two of these can be seen above, including the Birdwatching Group Topper which, after being photographed by a local resident and put on Facebook, received over 7,500 likes.

## News from the Board

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### John Lewis, Trustee for the East Midlands

So far as Trustee, I've arranged to visit meetings of all five Networks in the Region, established a working relationship with the other new Regional Trustees, assembled a strong, independent-minded and enthusiastic support team, attended several Trustee Induction sessions and hit the ground running with my other Regional responsibilities.

What have I got still to do? In the next few months, I will publish another issue of the Regional Trustee Newsletter, appoint a new Regional Publicity Adviser and start planning for another Regional Conference, possibly in 2025.

National Vice-Chair Allan Walmsley has said that he expects the new Trustees to make quite an impact. Let's not disappoint him!



### Jean Jackson, Trustee for the West Midlands

I've been Regional Trustee now for about ten weeks and I've already managed to speak to a lot of members. I'm looking forward to re-connecting with the Regional support team, and to having more people on that team, so that I can get a good view of what u3as in the Region want from me and what we'd benefit from doing collectively.



So far I've attended Much Wenlock's 10th anniversary celebrations which were very inspiring. I am contacting all the regional networks, and am working with Sutton Coldfield u3a to plan our first regional event on Wednesday 19 July.

## Your Coronation Celebrations

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### Singing for the King

Epsom and Ewell u3a's Singing for Pleasure group celebrated the King's Coronation with a performance at their community centre.

Group leader Jenny says, "We had a great time with lots of laughter. This event was a happy one and certainly got us in the mood for the Coronation weekend."

## Congratulations Roy

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Holme Valley u3a member and Beacon Volunteer Roy was named one of 500 Coronation Champions for his tireless voluntary work over more than a decade. He was nominated by AbilityNet, a charity that supports older and disabled people with the use of digital technology.

Roy says: "It came as a real surprise to find out I had been nominated because I don't consider what I do to be anything out of the ordinary."

Roy and the other Coronation Champions were chosen from over 5,000 nominations. The Awards were organised by the Royal Voluntary Service, of which The Queen Consort is President, and launched to recognise exceptional volunteers from across the country.



## Spotlight On:

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### Kathy, Prudhoe & District u3a

*Pictured: a bee orchid, photographed by Kathy whilst out with her Nature Watch group.*



What's my favourite thing I've learned since joining u3a? Here are a few:

- How to take some lovely photos of flowers, thanks to Carole in the photography group.
- There's a flower called "Changing forget-me-not"! (we found it on a walk with our Naturewatch group)
- How to graft knitting, and thanks to the convenor of our Crafts group I made a lovely job of finishing off my knitted jacket
- How to operate Zoom, to keep my u3a going through the Covid years and beyond
- A lot about being a groups coordinator, thorough acting as secretary to our regional network
- Through the German Conversation group, I learned or revised enough German to be able to converse with some very dear German friends
- The self-confidence to stand up in my local Co-op and promote the u3a to likely-looking shoppers, several of whom actually joined
- The joy of sharing interests with people I didn't previously know, and finding lasting friendships
- That the benefits of being a u3a member are massive!

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Headline photos: A bluebell meadow in Everdon Stubbs posted on Northampton u3a's Facebook page after a recent visit; u3a members taking part in a charcoal drawing workshop at our Off the Wall event; Wetherby u3a planting a silver birch tree to celebrate their 12<sup>th</sup> anniversary and last year's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the u3a movement.