

REGIONAL TRUSTEE'S REPORT JUNE 2010

The latest Borough in Greater London to express an interest in development of a U3A has been Kensington and Chelsea, and I was very pleased to be invited there by Zazia Pratt on May 21st to what I had expected to be their Launch. Unfortunately, there had been problems with publicity and in the event there were less than a dozen potential members there. Some of those present agreed to form themselves into a Steering Committee and set a date for a future meeting so it is hoped that a U3A can be launched later in the year. Meanwhile those present were invited to join us on June 24th as potential members for whom the half day should make a very good introduction.

So far enrolments for this Special Regional Meeting have been slow to come in and there are still places available. But it is essential to remind anyone interested to apply immediately as time is now short and numbers are needed for catering purposes. The day is especially aimed at new officers and newish members so U3As are asked to publicise this urgently.

Concern was expressed at a recent GLF meeting about the fact that there was to be no National Conference in 2010 as it was felt that members would lose interest. It is of course a legal requirement that we hold an Annual General Meeting and, as previously announced, this will take place on Thursday, September 9th at the Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester. Overnight accommodation on 8th September may be booked through National Office, and the day will begin at 10.00 am with a local speaker, to be followed by the AGM. Lunch will be available for £15.00 The nearest stations are Cheltenham or Kemble, from both of which there will be shuttle buses to the College. It is not too early to start encouraging your members to come.

The Trust is looking into the possibility of holding the 2011 Conference at a university in the Midlands, either Nottingham or Warwick.

The Trust is planning to sound out the views of member U3As on the way forward for U3A which is now a rapidly growing organisation with about one new U3A registering every week! It is hoped to discuss the findings of these questionnaires at the 2011 Conference.

At a recent meeting, the NEC discussed a letter from two members

of the GLF “Development Team” on “Reaching out to the Wider Community”. The feeling of the Chairman was that “many of the anxieties expressed can only properly be addressed by U3As themselves and...complacency and resistance to change at ...U3A level is a matter for individual U3As to combat” and has replied fully to one of the senders .

The “Olympic” Waterside Walk proposed for 2012 has attracted great interest in some Regions but little in others. In Greater London I have had only two expressions of interest to date from Harrow U3A and Abbeywood and Thamesmead U3A. I hope those in U3As in other parts of Greater London will consider it although I realise most Walking Groups will have done Thames Walks by now, and indeed the Thames was the subject of our Regional Study Day/Conference in 2007 But did any of these lead to individual research projects on eg local history , architecture etc ? There are also of course the tributaries of the Thames which may or may not have been explored and some of which would make interesting areas for local history groups to study . As a footnote, I enclose details of two books on London’s river which I have recently found helpful.

Jill Moore
May 27th 2010

Footnote.

Ackroyd, Peter (2007) : Thames : Sacred River (Chatto and Windus)

Barton, Nicholas (1962 and 1992) : The Lost Rivers of London
(Historical Publications, Ltd, London N7 8PL