

NEWSLETTER

December 1984

U3A City
CAE Centre
256 Flinders
MELBOURNE
Phone 63 :

U3A at Monash,
C/o Centre for Continuing Education,
Monash University,
Clayton 3168
Phone 541 2048

This first newsletter is performed a 'rush job' before Christmas. We hope in the future to bring out a more professional effort.

Several people have already volunteered to help, and we are interested in hearing from anyone with such skills as they think might be useful - cartoonists, photographers, layout artists, writers, ideas people.

Jill Fitzgibbon has been asked to convene the group producing the newsletter. She will be in the office on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings, and can be reached on 819 8824.

This newsletter is coming out too early to give you details of the actual courses which will begin in the New Year. Our next newsletter will, however, be able to give you outlines of the first programmes 'off the rank' at City, Hawthorn and probably Monash campuses, the first beginning in March 1985.

Of course, it's not intended that all potential courses will start together - they will be developed throughout the year, as teachers/leaders become available, and learners tell us their interests.

'U3A NETWORK' in the heading means that all three groups (and future ones if they wish) are 'networking' to help, share experiences and 'pilot' our way through 1985 with the minimum of mishaps and the maximum of creative energy for all involved.

Best wishes for Christmas, and a Happy U3A New Year to all.

January programme:

see p. 5-6

STRUCTURE OF THE U3A NETWORK

As a new organisation, our structure is still very flexible. At present there is a U3A Steering Committee, auspiced by the Australian Council on the Ageing; and committees for the City and Hawthorn campuses. Monash has a small group of enthusiasts who are organising their public meeting (information on this is under the 'U3A at Monash' heading).

From these committees have emerged working groups for education, administration, newsletters and to design a computer programme to handle enrolments.

If you would like to join any of these working parties, contact your nearest campus. Notes from these groups will be included in future newsletters.

U3A CITY CAMPUS

From the beginning of 1985 we will be in the fortunate position of having the U3A office and 'nerve centre' in part of a ground-floor shop in the CAE Centre. This will provide plenty of space for workers, will be visible for enquirers, and of course, being right opposite Flinders Street station, is very handy for those using public transport.

Courses and directions for 1985

Since our first newsletter, we have been moving towards establishing both courses and 'organisation' for 1985. We will certainly have four or five courses starting in March 1985, but expect a great boost to this number in response to the advertisement which will appear in the CAE programme guide on 29th and 30th January next year. If you look at the back page, you will get an idea of the range of topics requested, and teachers available for both the City and Hawthorn campuses.

Computer link

An aspect of U3A good fortune is the offer of computer facilities from a private businessman. With this we will be able to store and retrieve data on all aspects of membership, courses and resources.

We hope that some of those who wish to learn about computers will be able to do it in a very practical, 'hands on' way - helping the U3A!

Is there anyone who is a key punch operator? We do need help in getting the information into the system. If you can help, please ring Lloyd Saltmarsh (he'll be home over the Christmas break) on 890 6033.

U3A HAWTHORN CAMPUS

In November 1984, a public meeting saw the birth of the Hawthorn campus of the U3A. The meeting was a huge success, with people sitting on every available bit of floor space, to the horror and delight of Ann Whyte, the Community Education Officer - horror at the lack of seating and provision for such a crowd; delight at the enthusiasm and interest in the project.

The meeting was addressed by various dignitaries, including Dr. Roy Longworth, Director of Swinburne College, which will be 'hosting' this particular campus of U3A.

The real success of the meeting has been shown by the number of people volunteering to 'staff' the campus. At the time of going to press, 187 people had volunteered to work in every imaginable field from office work to catering, and another 36 had offered their skills as tutors or lecturers.

On the administrative side, a committee has been set up with Mrs. Betty Marginson in the chair, and volunteers were appointed to sub-committees for Education, Organisation, Finance and Planning, Publicity and Research.

U3A classes in Hawthorn will be held in the Community Education Centre, currently being renovated, at 24 Wakefield Street, and in other Swinburne facilities. Access to different local schools and colleges can be negotiated as required.

U3A AT MONASH

Monash Campus Meeting: There will be a public meeting on Tuesday 12th February 1985, 11.30 am at Monash University. Venue: ROTUNDA LECTURE THEATRE (R1)

This meeting is to discuss the formation of a group tentatively entitled "University of the Third Age at Monash" - abbreviation being "U3AM".

A low cost lunch will be available. For any enquiries ring 541 0811 Ext. 2048.

Laurie Crompton is one of those already involved in the newsletter production. He had done a little investigating into the background of U3A's, talks about some of the issues we have to be prepared for, and demolishes firmly some of the more popular myths about 'ageing'.

Few people seem to have any problem understanding the 'third age' part of U3A's, but 'university' can sound a little forbidding.

So we did some research, and found that the U3A concept is much closer to the original ideal of a university than are the modern 'marbled halls of learning'.

According to one source, universities probably started as scholastic guilds; a spontaneous coming together of teachers and scholars. For others, the Museum of Alexandria in the third century was one of the first universities, or academies, named after the olive grove of Academe, the place of Plato's retirement. It was not until late in the 14th century that universities became specific, and exclusive, areas where, recognised and sanctioned by the courts and/or ecclesiastical authorities, academics controlled the process of education.

In other words, universities were originally groups of people who met together to discuss different topics and to learn from those discussions.

And U3A's are people - people who have gained a lifetime of experience and expertise, joining in an exchange of knowledge. People who want to teach others for the pleasure of passing on their experience: people who love learning for no other reason than wanting to know.

Compare this to the modern university where academics establish and teach prescribed courses; where entrance examinations, and the dreaded 'finals' mean that many, including those merely wishing to expand their knowledge on a specific subject, are excluded.

In fact, , many U3A activities may not operate along the line of 'classes'. Many will be self-directed and self-planned activities, ranging from single events to extended programmes of meetings, organised by small groups of U3A members with common interests.

An extract from a UK publication entitled 'How to Run a University of the Third Age' makes the following point about such groups.

'Most important of all, you will probably need a convenor, or leader for each group - someone who will keep them together, oversee the organization of its programme, make sure the group sustains itself and, above all, encourages the members to give as well as take and persuade them to have the confidence to participate fully. These are not 'Tutors' in the old-fashioned sense of knowledgeable persons with information to impart. Technically, they would be known as 'animateurs' their success lies in bringing the best out of members in 'animating' them. There is a skill to doing this job effectively and the chosen leaders may wish to meet and discuss their roles. They may even wish to seek out an expert in group leadership who might volunteer to pass on some helpful hints.'

We need to identify, among our members, people who have the kinds of experience and skills which would give them confidence to act as group 'convenors' or 'animateurs'.

Which brings us to a few other all too frequent questions.

What are the pitfalls? How is the U3A to function properly with groups directing and planning their own programmes? Without examinations, how will students assess their progress? How much say will the students have?

Here we are fortunate in being able to draw on overseas experience to help us. Many problems will be avoided by involving prospective students in the initial discussion groups and by the exchange, between campuses, of both leaders and information. The Education Committee has already met and discussed these matters.

It must be remembered that the role of a U3A is to allow people to learn at whatever level is most comfortable for them. If a group chooses to set themselves some kind of test - fine! If not - that's fine too.

Finally, it appears that someone has been listening to the rumour that the older a person becomes, the worse will be their memory. Nonsense! At the University of Queensland (you know - the State of Retirement), a study has shown that loss of memory is almost non-existent until the ninth and tenth decades of a person's life. And then (woe is me) the loss is at the alarming rate of one or two percent per year. Which could be a little worrying by the time you receive your second telegram from Her Majesty...



SUMMER SAMPLES

There is a hum of activity and enthusiasm amongst the people working towards getting U3A programmes off and away later in 1985. But on a number of occasions it was pointed out that for older people, January is often the 'deadest' month of the year - families away, many activities closed...

"Summer samples" will, we hope, provide a few activities of interest. Some are one-offs. Some are literally short "samples" of future more detailed courses.

For further information, and to enrol, please ring the Hawthorn U3A office: 819 8824.

NEARLY A CENTURY OF EXPERIENCE...

Nearly a century of experience, from selling newspapers on the day World War I was declared, to feeling a strange hand on my shoulder in Madrid. Mary Townsend

Thursday 24th January.

OPERA: ITS GENESIS AND DEVELOPMENT

F. Josefe is a specialist in opera, in particular the history and development of opera from its beginnings through to modern times. In non-technical terms, learn about the great Italian and German operas. Two sessions. Another "sample" - the topic may be developed in much greater depth during 1985. Monday 21st & Thursday 24th January.

PERSONAL SKILLS

An introduction to human relations and reach to people through group activities and movement music. Jean Smith will be the leader.

Thursday 10th January

HERBS AND HERB-GROWING

The 'growing' interest in herbs is very much part of the movement back to natural ways of doing things. Judy Wadham will talk on cultivation, medicinal and culinary uses, companion planting, pest control, making gifts, etc. This is a "sample" of what a more detailed course in the CAE City will be like. Monday 14th January at 10.30 a.m.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE AUTHORISED VERSION OF THE

L. Austin: an historical perspective talk, followed by discussion.

Thursday 24th January

GALLERY WALKABOUT

Diana Lovell will take a small group to look at the Chelsea Procelain Exhibition at the National Gallery. "Flowers and Fables" is a very remarkable exhibition. There has never before been anything like it outside England or the United States. As well as pieces from Australian Galleries, there are many pieces from private collections.

Wednesday 9th January
Wednesday 16th January

DEVELOPMENTS IN PSYCHOLOGY FROM FREUD ONWARD

Lecture and discussion by Lenka Ter. Date:

Wednesday 23rd January at 10 a.m.

Subjects Requested

Offers to Teach

Art Subjects
 Astronomy
 Anthropology
 Asian Studies
 Aboriginal Studies
 Antiques
 Admin. & Organization
 Automobile mechanics

Art Subjects
 Anthropology

Admin. & Organization

Botany
 Business Affairs
 Budgeting
 Bible Studies

Business Affairs
 Budgeting

Current Affairs
 Computers
 Community Affairs
 Cultural Studies
 Crafts
 Creative Drama

Current Affairs
 Computers

Crafts

Educational Reform
 Environment
 Ecology
 Economics

Film

Genealogy
 Geography
 Geology

History
 Humanities

History
 Humanities

International Affairs

Languages
 Literature

Languages
 Literature

Musical Appreciation
 Medicine (alternative)
 Meteorology

Photography
 Politics
 Philosophy
 Psychology
 Public Speaking

Photography
 Philosophy
 Psychology
 Public Speaking

Research
 Religion
 Retirement Issues

Social Studies
 Science
 Solar Energy

Social Studies

Tai-chi (theatrical)
 Typing
 Wines and Wineries
 Writing

Writing