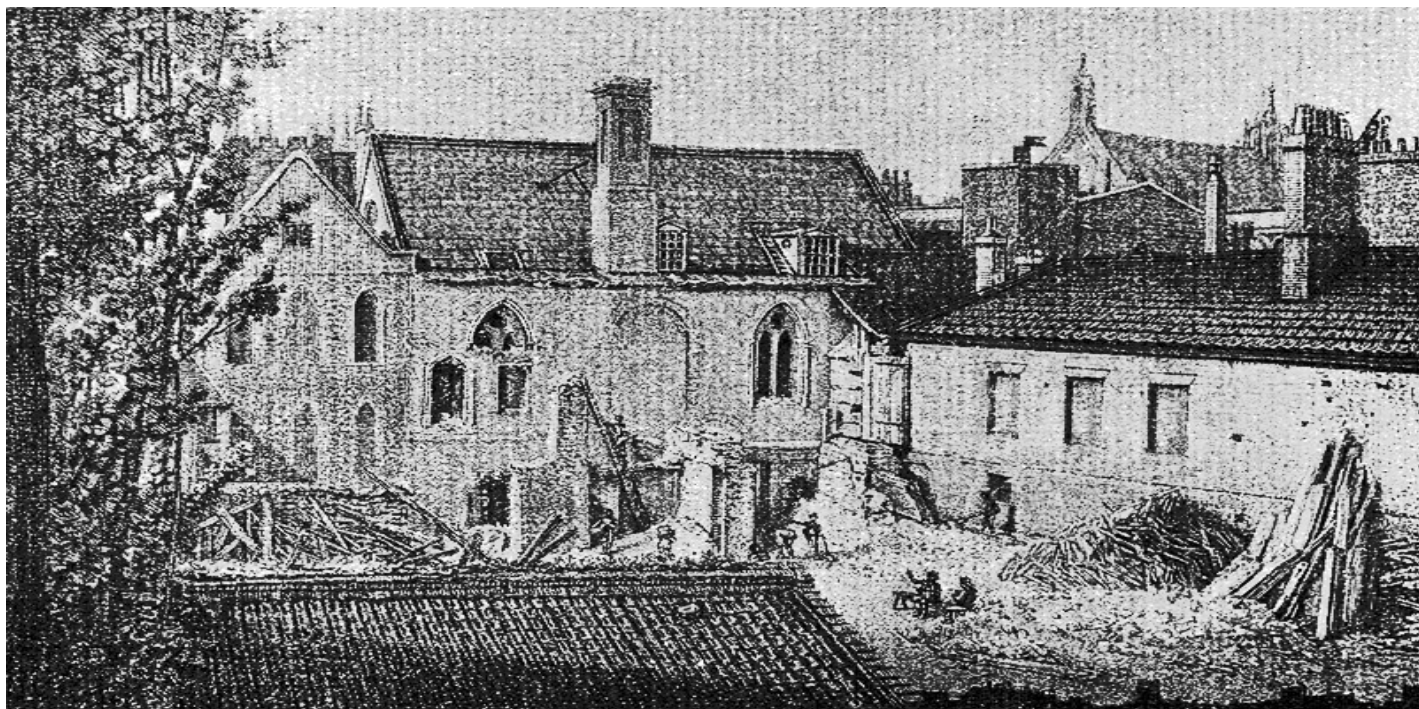




Issue 51  
January 2013

North London University of the Third Age

# Newsletter



The east side of the House of Lords, and the east end of the Prince's Chamber in 1807

## The Big Care Debate

Who should care for the vulnerable in society? **Peter Cox** reports on a debate on this subject in the House of Lords on 7 December

The word 'unique' is over-used, but it was apt for the debate on social care. Around 200 people sat in the House for a two-hour televised discussion. Few other than lords and baronesses are ever allowed to actually sit in the chamber – visitors are escorted round, but may not sit on the illustrious red-padded benches – but we were a happy exception. 'We' were a reasonably representative sample of young and old, from 16 to 18 and 60 to 80+, for

this was billed as an inter-generational debate. As it was indeed, although the wealth-producing generation between the two might have wondered why it hadn't been invited.

The prime speakers were drawn equally from three schools, in Westminster, Canterbury and Banbury, and their local U3A groups. The rest of the audience came from seven further schools dotted round the country, and a wide range of U3As. It was a

tripartite debate, with speakers allocated to each of three interest groups – the state, the family, and the 'third', voluntary, sector. While nobody would claim that any single group should be solely responsible for caring for the vulnerable in society – children in care, the aged, the disadvantaged, the sick, the disabled – our job as speakers was to persuade the audience that our group was the one that should be *primarily* responsible.

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Newsletters and Updates are each published three times a year. They are edited by Barry Davies, Helen Green and Judith Abbs.

Copy deadline for the next Update is 6 February.

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Annual membership of North London U3A costs £32 or £56 for two members who live at the same address.

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The event was run as a genuine Lords debate would have been, with the speaker, Baroness D'Souza, in the chair; Hansard and cameras present; ushers and court officials in their wigs timing each contribution. The six primary speakers, two representing each group, were from schools and were allotted four minutes each. Their speeches were well researched and rehearsed, soberly but persuasively argued, and, almost as impressive, all came in at about three minutes forty-five seconds. Subsequent prepared speakers old and young were called by the speaker in turn, interspersed with others from the 'floor' of the House. Each of these had 90 seconds. A few overran and had to be halted by a gentle tap of a gavel, and one or two stumbled over what they were reading, but

in general the quality of the speakers was high. Finally a member from each group summed up, each in three minutes.

Of course, it wasn't a true 'debate', for contributors spoke from what they had prepared: there was little that was extempore, and nobody specifically challenged anything that had gone before. So in truth it felt a little sanitised, and extremely polite – and thus far more like a normal Lords debate than the rowdy Commons hurly-burly. Those who briefed us and took us on our tours beforehand were clearly partisan about the civilised Lords way of going about things, compared to the unruly 'junior' chamber. And the outcome was entirely predictable, for the state carried the vote, as we all expected, by 138 votes, with 41 for the family, and 21 for the third sector.

I suspect few were swayed from their original view, but it was an education and a privilege to be able to perch where so many great men and women have sat. Naturally, as one of the U3A speakers allocated the family to champion, I can assure readers that our contributions were utterly brilliant. You can see the debate for yourself on the Parliament website, at the address below. Members of each group were toggled out in different coloured lanyards – green, orange, and purple. So, thrillingly, as an aged family supporter I was at last able to wear Jenny Joseph's purple, though I did forget to bring my stick to rattle along Parliament's railings!

[www.parliament.uk/business/news/2012/december/lords-chamber-event---big-care-debate](http://www.parliament.uk/business/news/2012/december/lords-chamber-event---big-care-debate) 

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## Your membership and what it means

Being a U3A member isn't just about joining groups, says **Janet Home**, chairman of North London U3A

I'd like to wish all of you a happy, healthy new year. May you and your families flourish in 2013, and may you continue to enjoy North London U3A.

Many of us have different expectations from our membership, though. To some, it primarily means joining a group with people who share our interests and making friends. This is, of course, the social structure – and indeed the lifeblood – of U3As, but there is much more to membership than that. When you join a U3A, you become part of a national and international movement which knows that men

and women are not ready to take a back seat when they cease full-time employment and just grow old gracefully. We want more, and we work together to provide the educational activities that satisfy our need to go on learning indefinitely for the joy of it.

Opportunities for doing this are not limited to North London but extend to summer schools and study days organised nationally and within London Region, all run on a voluntary basis by members, people like you and me.

For the first time this year, London Region will have its own summer school. The dates will be

30 July to 1 August; the venue, the St Bride Foundation, Bride Lane, Fleet Street. The theme will be 'London through Art, History, Literature, Music and Science'. More details will be available soon. For financial reasons, the London Region school will be non-residential, but there are also two national summer schools, the first near Telford, Shropshire from 15 to 18 July and the second at Cirencester from 19 to 22 August. Both of these are fully residential, using en-suite student accommodation in agricultural

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colleges. Fuller details of both are on page 15.

In our U3A we have a large number of interest groups, all open only to our members. It is for this reason that we ask you to show your membership card when you join a group and at the beginning of the new academic year. Please keep your card in your purse or wallet. It gives not

only your membership number but also shows whether you have paid for the current year. We need to know that you are a paid-up member, so that the group is covered by the public and product liability insurance provided for us by National Office. Also, it would not be fair for people who have not paid

to enjoy the privileges to which your subscription entitles you. ✂



## Welcoming new members

New members' meetings, which take place in members' homes, are a chance for those who have recently joined to find out more about North London U3A, make new acquaintances and meet some committee members. If you would like to come, please telephone your hosts a few days beforehand so that they know how many to expect.

Area	Date	Time	Contact	Telephone
Finchley N3	Tuesday 15 January	10.30am	Jenny Clark	8346 3751
Highgate N6	Monday 25 February	3.00pm	Dorothy and Douglas Barnes	8341 3592
Muswell Hill N10	Friday 22 March	10.30am	Hilda Wilson	8442 0567

WE WOULD LIKE to increase the pool of members who are willing to host new members' meetings. If you would like to be part of this team, please contact me for more information. We are also looking for venues that are close to transport links and are suitable for six to eight guests plus two committee members.

SUE TELLER

NEW MEMBERS' LIAISON

7609 5172 GINPALACE@ME.COM

## London choral festival gets bigger

The Brandenburg Choral Festival 2013 launches its biggest programme yet, supported by its new artistic patron, John Rutter CBE.

Over four months from 29 December to 6 May, 71 choirs will be performing in 66 concerts at a choice of 10 central London venues. With

vocal styles ranging from choral masterpieces and a cappella classics to jazz ensembles, barbershop groups and gospel choirs, everyone will have a chance to hear their favourite music. You'll find details of concerts and participating choirs at [www.brandenburgchoralfestival.co.uk](http://www.brandenburgchoralfestival.co.uk). ✂

## Ageing sociably

Businesses could do more to help elderly people feel less lonely, but most don't, according to a recent study. **Dorothy Barnes** reports on a workshop she attended at which this report was launched

The Demos think tank recently held a workshop for representatives from business and charities concerned with older people as part of their Gulbenkian-funded project on ageing sociably. Four representatives of North London U3A took part.

The remit of the Demos research was to explore how businesses can help to prevent and reduce loneliness and isolation in old age. The project report – 'The role of businesses in supporting older people's social participation' – thoughtfully identifies loneliness and isolation as important problems for everyone's health and wellbeing, and emphasises that, for obvious reasons, older people

are more at risk.

It identifies some businesses, especially those involved in food retailing, that have realised the commercial value of building a positive local identity and describes eight case studies. Macdonald's, for example, hold coffee mornings for older customers in Barkingside; social media surgeries are provided in the Midlands by Titanic Breweries; and the Dementia Café in Market Harborough is supported by Sainsbury's. The authors commented that voluntary organisations have perhaps overlooked the private sector as possible partners.

The conclusion urged positive action but did not end on a

hopeful note.

I was able to represent the U3A at the launch of the report. The difficulty in achieving positive action was demonstrated by the fact that the only business participant in the panel of speakers – and it was an impressive one – was from the Co-operative Society.

The report recommends that central government should actively promote business involvement as part of their stated policy of creating an inclusive society. It seemed to me that there is little likelihood of that happening in the current climate.

The report is available online: [demos.co.uk/publications/ageingsociably](http://demos.co.uk/publications/ageingsociably)



The Long Gallery

## Transforming Lauderdale House

Lauderdale House, where North London U3A was born, is in the throes of reinventing itself for the 21st century, a mere five centuries after it was first built. To do justice to its unique heritage as the oldest house in continuous residence in the area and to further develop its educational and arts venue activi-

ties will need money – up to £2 million. This sum can be achieved if the application to the Heritage Lottery Fund is successful and can be matched by other public bodies and the local community. Included in the proposed improvements will be:

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- a modern 'state-of-the art' learning centre to replace the small out-of-date workshop
- a glass-roofed atrium inspired by the Tudor courtyard. This will provide a central reception and second entrance and enable the running of more than one event at a time
- more performances, classes and events
- modern, effective lighting and soundproofing
- new heritage tours of the building for everyone
- a heritage learning programme for young people
- appointment of a heritage education officer
- conservation of historic features such as Nell Gwyn's bath
- new electrical and mechanical services – more efficient, greener and less costly
- a general makeover for the whole house including the cafe
- wheelchair access from the front and the park, and to the first floor
- more and improved toilets, baby change and disabled WC.

North London U3A was inaugurated in Lauderdale House and over the years has been able to use it at a favourable rate. Any members in a generous mood should look at the website [www.lauderdalehouse.org.uk](http://www.lauderdalehouse.org.uk) for how to donate or contact the general manager, Katherine Ives, on 8348 8716.



## 2012 wasn't all about sport

**Maggie Smith** describes her experience as an Olympics host and as the oldest participant in the Tate Modern's Unilever installation, *These Associations*, (voted in December by *The Guardian* as the best art event of 2012)

To me, 2012 was an unexpectedly rich experience for someone who dislikes spectator sport and hated what was happening to transport routes in London. But after the Olympics opening ceremony and the people in pink, everything changed. People smiled

and spoke to each other!

I responded to a plea from a U3A member in Wokingham, a 'gamesmaker' who was to be a driver for the Paralympics and was seeking hospitality. We have a mutual colleague who 'vouched' for us both, and Sylvia came to

stay. She contributed abundantly to expenses, plus taking me to the theatre and lunch, and bringing home chocolates and food left from her daily lunchbox.

However, it was the Cultural Olympiad that enriched my year. In the splendid Spiegeltent – a

large travelling tent used for entertainment – on Blackheath, a non-U3A writers group I lead joined other groups in reading extracts from ‘Out of My Window’, Lewisham Libraries’ joint project with Spread the Word, which supports developing writers.

Next day the Spiegelent hosted ‘The Big Conversation’, introduced by Theodore Zeldin, an Oxford philosophy professor and founder of the Oxford Muse. We spent an evening dining with a complete stranger and were given a Menu of Conversation; instead of food, each course offered questions. The theme – the Olympics; the first question: ‘If you were directing an opening ceremony, what values other than those of the Olympics would you cover?’ With my dinner partner, who had spent the day at the equestrian events in Greenwich Park, I spent some time analysing what the Olympic values were.

The final question: ‘If you were hosting a world-wide event, what would your theme be?’ We had shared deep thoughts about our lives, were from very different worlds – and age-groups – but we agreed immediately. We would celebrate arts and culture and feature little competitive hysteria.

I have spent four most exciting months in the Turbine Hall of Tate Modern, working with a combination of more than 200 participants in *These Associations*, a live art encounter-based installation by Berlin-based artist Tino Sehgal.

On the last evening Tino introduced me proudly to the Tate’s director, Sir Nicholas Serota, as his ‘oldest’ participant – I was the



‘These Associations’ by Tino Sehgal

only one over 80 – the youngest was 16. I did feel very slightly like a specimen!

I have met fascinating people from all over the world, both among the group and from telling stories to visitors (I apparently spoke on two separate days to Sir Nicholas, whom I failed to recognise!). I also discovered the versatility and busyness of Tate Modern; the Turbine Hall used as a playspace for toddlers, for picnics, for lying on the floor to relax (adults). I learned, too, how long the hall is when walking very slowly up and down it. Most people loved the ‘conceits,’ though some insisted they were scripted. All were true, following themes of a sense of arrival; of belonging; someone in our lives we admired; a time of fear or despair. We sang, too – choral chants of words from Hannah Arendt and Heidegger, and the singing was regularly admired for its spiritual quality.

How did I get involved? An email in May from Tate Modern inviting ‘People over 50 to a participative art/drama workshop’;

I had not then heard of Tino Sehgal and assumed it was part of Tate Modern’s community outreach, but it sounded fun.

And it was! Tino invited me to take part in the installation, warning me diplomatically that as he did not use furniture I would have to spend hours standing and walking. He failed to mention the incredibly fast running, sometimes backwards up the ramp, but I usually buttonholed visitors during the most energetic moments. I’ve made new friends from all age groups and very creative backgrounds. Tate Modern apparently had a 20 per cent increase in visitors over the season, while every other museum and gallery in London was down by as much as 50 per cent.

Next step? In February 2013 there will be another installation in the Turbine Hall – this time for older women, so no running, I hope, who made contributions in the 20th century (they give as one example Greenham Common). I’ve already been invited to join in! ✨

### Life is a joke that's just begun

In 1885 three little maids from school sang that 'Life is a joke that's just begun'. And life really had only just begun for *The Mikado*. Every week a trio of pert schoolgirls somewhere in the world is filled to the brim with girlish glee as they escape from their ladies' seminary. At this very moment, audiences from Latvia to Leningrad, from Sydney to South Africa, are still laughing, gasping or tapping their toes to a Gilbert and Sullivan opera after 130 years. **Max de Bóo** reports on an enjoyable monthly meeting

At the October meeting, Bernard Lockett of the G&S Society treated us to a fascinating insight into the lives and works of these two creators of British musical theatre.

WS Gilbert was born in 1836 into a wealthy London family; his father was a professor of medicine. Gilbert became a barrister and his work brought him into contact with the disadvantaged people of Victorian England as well as corrupt members of the law, army and political sphere. He began writing witty satires on the pompous figures of the establishment. The most famous is Sir Joseph Porter in *HMS Pinafore*, a thinly disguised portrayal of W H Smith (of the stationery store), who was appointed first lord of the admiralty in 1876 after a lifetime of political desk jobs:

*Stick close to your desk  
and never go to sea,  
And you all may be rulers  
of the Queen's Navee!*

Arthur Sullivan was born in London in 1842. He was the son of a military bandmaster and by the age of 10 he could play all the instruments. He composed anthems and songs and was awarded

numerous scholarships, one of which took him to Leipzig, where he met the composer Rossini.

Sullivan's real ambition was to compose grand opera, concertos and symphonies, but Rossini persuaded him that musical theatre also deserved the best possible music.

Sullivan was knighted for his 'classical' music but was equally serious about the music he composed for Gilbert's librettos.

When Gilbert and Sullivan met, the British theatre was divided into either grand opera for the rich or burlesque for the poor.

Gilbert and Sullivan's first work together (*Thespis*) was mediocre, but the producer – Richard D'Oyly Carte – recognised something special and commissioned them to write a short opera. Gilbert produced *Trial by Jury*. Sullivan could not stop laughing when he read the libretto and wrote the music without editing a single word. This established a pat-



tern; neither partner ever changed anything of the other's work.

Over the next 25 years, with the support and promotion of D'Oyly Carte, they revolutionised musical theatre. Gilbert wrote librettos with wit and humour, satirising members of the establishment in surprising plots that often finished with a complete social turn-around, in a 'topsy turvy' world. Sullivan matched the words with glorious music that was a perfect fit. Rogers and Hammerstein, Cole Porter and Andrew Lloyd Webber, would all acknowledge the direct influence of Gilbert and Sullivan on their work.

Both were exacting taskmasters. Sullivan demanded a high standard of musicality; Gilbert would not allow the actors to ham it up – no matter how absurd the character, the actor had to play it ‘for real’. The two argued, mostly over money and costs. Gilbert was economical; Sullivan, a spendthrift. Moreover, he always wanted to return to more classical music (he was court musician).

Their partnership broke up with bad feeling on both sides.

Sullivan died in 1900 and Gilbert returned to the law, part-time, for which he was eventually knighted (not for his magnificent theatrical work). He died in 1911, probably of a heart attack, trying to rescue two ladies from a deep pond in his garden after a heavy lunch.

The D’Oyly Carte family con-

tinued to stage G&S operas until 1982 and they are still performed all over the world. Bernard Lockett was asked why the works of these two giants of musical theatre are not recognised by today’s musical establishment – why they are not given prominence on Radio 4, for example. Whatever the reason, Gilbert’s words will always be relevant to society and Sullivan’s music will always charm us. ❁

## Radio days

In the late 50s and early 60s, the BBC produced a radio series that depicted the lives and struggles of ordinary working men and women. **Patricia Isaacs** reports on a monthly meeting in which North London U3A member Peter Cox described the creation of that series – and which brought back many memories to Patricia. Additional reporting by **Richard Callanan**

I always enjoy monthly meetings, but there was an extra element of nostalgia for me when Peter Cox spoke in November about the BBC’s series *The Radio Ballads*. This accomplished, radical run of eight broadcasts dealt with the everyday lives of labouring people in a range of industries, many of which no longer exist or have changed fundamentally.

Railway yards, fishing vessels, coal mines – and two folk singers in search of traditional workers’ ballads and their origins: all came together on the radio between 1958 and 1964. The singers were Ewan MacColl and Peggy Seeger, and while Peter Cox was talking about them, I was on a time-travel trip to rooms above pubs in Camden Town, in Kilburn, and in Joan Littlewood’s left-wing Theatre Workshop, where, in my late teens, I helped to run evening

gigs of music and song. The names of singers and their songs from England, Ireland and America came rushing back into my mind. I had met them all and others too, and was the richer for knowing them, for actively sharing their hopes for our world.

Add all that to the vision of a rare and determined BBC producer called Charles Parker, add his conservative politics to Ewan MacColl’s absolute belief in communism, and add to the mix a passion for music, introducing to radio listeners songs sung by people

recording their hard working conditions, and the dreams they never allowed to die. And then add a pretty, sweet-voiced young American singer called Peggy



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Seeger, sister of songwriter Pete, and you have an explosion of little-known songs and singers and a radio programme never before imagined.

The results of their collaboration were remarkable. They recorded and meticulously edited the voices of the workers in their own environments. The new mobile tape recorders of the time allowed them to speak to the participants in their own homes and places of work, with no need to suffer the daunting atmosphere of a radio studio.

For the first time, local dialects were heard on the BBC, where previously there had been nothing but received pronunciation; the realities of working people's lives in parts of England far from London, previously of no interest


to producers at the BBC, were suddenly becoming heard and appreciated. And also for the first time, these ballads and their narratives were heard in the true voice of the people who lived them, rather than the voices of actors.

Peter Cox has written a superb book, *Set into Song*, which covers all of this and a great deal more and offers readers a lively and absorbing history of those times. It is meticulously researched, using all the existing archive material and a host of interviews with surviving participants, most particularly Peggy Seeger, who spent three full days going through the programmes with the author. The book is featured on the website [www.setintosong.co.uk](http://www.setintosong.co.uk), where you can enjoy listening again to all of the Radio Ballads or discover their



Peggy Seeger

unique quality for the first time.

Peter's enthralling talk to us included extracts from his book, which offers insights into the BBC management of the day, as well as the forgotten ballads and the background to those ballads. Our thanks to Peter, and an extra one from me for so vividly recalling those magical times. 

## Interest groups

### A letter from Patricia Isaacs

North London U3A's groups organiser

Dear members,

New Year greetings to all of you from the groups organiser team!

Last year was a busy, productive year for the team and for our U3A as a whole. We had some excellent speakers at monthly meetings, which were made even more enjoyable with improvements to the sound system. During the year we held several coffee mornings and tea parties for new members; it is always a delight to welcome those interested, interesting people, some of whom are already active and have become coordinators.

Our next big venture will be the spring tea party for group leaders, where they will be able to meet those leading similar groups and to chat to old and new friends. And my team and the committee will have an opportunity to thank them all for the wonderful job they do. It cannot be said too often that groups are the life blood of any U3A, and their success is due to the dedication and enthusiasm of their leaders. Very many thanks to all of them.

The autumn term was busy with events. There was the begin-

ning of term event on 10 September, when groups set out their stalls to advertise themselves and attract new members. It was a noisy, lively and successful occasion; we put a lot of effort into making it so, and we'll do even better at the beginning of the autumn term this year! As well as that, we had the quiz, concert and festive lunch in December; a great deal of work went into the plans and preparation for that day, too, including a truly delicious lunch organised by our social events team, and the efforts were wonder-

fully rewarded by the fun of it all.

The autumn term was busy, too, with new groups starting, or holding taster sessions with the intention of launching properly in January. These include Publish Your Own Book (looking for interested members), Life, Art and Politics 4 (very popular), and Patchwork, where the stitchers will make quilts for children in hospital. The patchworkers will be meeting at a residential home in Highgate, where the staff are very keen to become involved with

local communities, and North London U3A has got in at the beginning.

We are hoping to set up a monthly outing group, to be called Faraway Days. It will travel outside London by coach, with a first excursion at the end of March. So keep an eye open for more news on this, or get in touch with Melvyn Rees: email [melvyn.tymel@gmail.com](mailto:melvyn.tymel@gmail.com) or phone 07903 456485. Any new information on groups will be available, as usual, on the website, in newslet-

ters and Updates; if you have any queries please contact the group leader (you will find contact details in the interest groups booklet) or me or any of my team (page 4 of the booklet).

Enjoy your groups to the full; make the most of your involvement with North London U3A, and I hope to meet many of you at our monthly meetings.

Very best wishes for 2013.

*Patricia*

## News of groups

### Faraway Days

Many of us have enjoyed Away Days spent in other parts of London. Now Melvyn Rees is setting up a **Faraway Days** group, which will venture further afield into the Home Counties on coach outings. The group will visit places of interest such as country houses, gardens, picturesque towns and villages and historic sites. The outings will last a whole day, picking people up in a couple of locations in north London and getting back by 6 or 7pm. U3A members who wish to take part will be asked to book and pay in advance (for coach travel and admission charge) to secure a place. Why not try it and explore the world of the south-east and the counties around London?

Contact Melvyn for information: 8446 3029, [melvyn.tymel@gmail.com](mailto:melvyn.tymel@gmail.com)

### History of America

The new **History of America** group's sessions will run fortnightly starting on 23 January from 10.30am until 12 noon at a Highgate venue. The focus will be on North America since 1492. The group will examine and debate the influences both in and outside of the continent with emphasis on the United States and its influence on world history. We welcome people who are curious and willing to contribute to discussions and, hopefully, enjoy themselves.

Contact Michael Abrahams for details: 8341 1452, [michael@brind2.com](mailto:michael@brind2.com)

### Life, Art and Politics

Another **Life, Art and Politics** group has arrived. We shall be meeting for the first time on Tuesday 15 January at 2.30pm, and we plan to continue fortnightly from then. Our venue is close to East Finchley station and Muswell Hill Road. We still have space for some additional members.

If you are interested, contact Jane Marsh: [oriana.jane@btinternet.com](mailto:oriana.jane@btinternet.com) or 8883 4869.

### Patchwork

A January treat, **Patchwork** will hold its first meeting on Wednesday 16 January, from 10.30am until 12 noon. Our prime purpose will be to make quilts for children in hospitals, but we can help beginners to start on something smaller, while we chat over coffee and biscuits.

Contact Patricia Isaacs for more details: [patricia.highgate@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:patricia.highgate@yahoo.co.uk) or 8348 8782.

## Chess

The North London U3A **Chess** group continues to thrive and is now fortunate to have fortnightly sessions led by a member of the English Chess Federation. We reconvene on 9 January at the Blue Beetle, St Mary's Parish Church, Finchley N3, from **3.30–5.30pm**, with facilities for a tea break. We warmly welcome new

members at all levels, so do come along for a taster session.

**Contact the coordinator, Daphne Berkovi,**  
[milly1915@btopenworld.com](mailto:milly1915@btopenworld.com)



## Publish your own book

More and more people are using internet self-publishing or independent publishing to produce their own books. Some U3A members have already achieved publication, and others may well have material that they would like to see published. I am proposing a workshop where interested members can get help in tackling this task – which can seem rather intimidating.

This would not be about creative writing, but the technical process of organising text and/or pictures that may already exist into a book.

It could be almost any kind of work, from your family history or biographical memoir to fiction or poems gathering dust in your bottom drawer.

At an exploratory meeting in November 2012, members with experience of producing books described their adventures in

DIY publishing – and some of the pitfalls. Clearly a group could be a resource for this, and members also spoke about potential new projects they were hoping to get help with.

We heard about several websites through which you can produce a finished book, either for private circulation or for commercial publication. You can have a printed book, an e-book, or both. You can get a big print-run or just a few copies printed on demand. The basic production cost is modest, and you can get extra help (at additional cost) with such matters as editing, marketing and legal issues, either through the websites or from independent professionals with yourself as project manager.

We now want to form a regular group, meeting monthly as a workshop, to which members can bring their work-in-progress to

discuss and develop.

If you are interested, please join us at an inaugural meeting on Wednesday 16 January, 10.30am – 12 noon, at 91 Hertford Road, N2 9BX. Hertford Road is half a mile's walk from East Finchley tube, or a bus ride up the High Road, fifth on the right after the Fortis Green junction. Parking is free in the mornings.

The only requirement is to have some material that's waiting to be brought together into a book. And the task does need basic computer skills, including word-processing and using the internet (but don't rule yourself out if you're not an expert – we might be able to think of ways to help).

**Contact Paul Pengelly**  
[ppengelly08@gmail.com](mailto:ppengelly08@gmail.com)  
7254 3581



## Letters

### What's in a name?

**W**hy do we continue to use the word 'chairman' when so many U3A officers, locally and nationally, are women?

Men and women who sing are called 'singers'; women who act are increasingly called 'actors'. In catering, 'server' has replaced 'waiter' and 'waitress' because the gender of the person bringing your food is irrelevant. The police force no longer uses 'WPC'; someone who puts out fires is called a 'firefighter'.

A person who sells things is called a 'salesperson'. So why not use 'chairperson' or 'chair' for a person who presides over, or chairs, a meeting or organisation?

Language evolves to reflect the times. Not so long ago, all leaders were male. As this is no longer the case, why not mirror the change in society by using gender-neutral terminology?

HELEN GREEN

## Obituary

# Lively, bright and interested to the last:

## Agatha Gewirtz

16 September 1930 – 25 October 2012



Friends and fellow North London U3A members have been

saddened to unexpectedly lose such an upbeat, sunny spirit from our midst.

Agatha maintained a hectic pace in friendship, family and interests and was an indefatigable member of many interest groups. She chaired one of the film groups for over three years.

From her early life in Germany to her education in North London Collegiate and Oxford and her years as a lecturer in English as a Foreign Language at Southgate

College, Agatha balanced family life and work with a thirst for knowledge and new departures. She even became a counsellor shortly before her retirement. This kept her forever young, and, combined with her warm, generous nature, a good companion for all ages. She was an inspiration to us all to live boldly and not to waste precious time raging against 'the dying of the light'.

She will be sorely missed.

MARTA BROWN ✨

### GoodSwap

JAMES CRAWFORD has a number of items, all in working order:

- video camera tapes of North London activities which could be of interest after editing
- 14-inch Proview cream computer monitor
- two 20-inch Dell black computer monitors.

Contact James, 8348 6531 or [jjpcrawford@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:jjpcrawford@blueyonder.co.uk)

BEN MARSHALL has a number of items:

- Parkside 150w, 400 g/min electric paint sprayer (brand new)
- Reviver electric car tyre compressor
- silver plate Godinger photo frame, 3 hinged sections holding eight photos (brand new)
- Scrabble de luxe set, with built-in turntable
- RummiKub set
- RummiKub Word set
- two Monopoly sets
- Scrabble set.

Contact Ben, [bevimarmon@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:bevimarmon@hotmail.co.uk) or 8361 3241

PATRICIA HAVELL needs a piano stool, so if you have a spare one or know someone who does, please contact [patriciahavell@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:patriciahavell@yahoo.co.uk) or 8920 0878

VIVIEN PRESTON's photo printer has found a new home, thanks to GoodSwap!

## Planned events

Organised by Jim Sweeney,  
John Hajdu and Sue Teller

### Wapping and Cable Street walk

Friday 29 March

Wapping and Shadwell have been connected in the past with the docks, crime and debauchery. We have our excellent blue badge guide to introduce us to highlights of this former lowlife area, including a mural depicting the infamous battle of Cable Street, Wilton's Music Hall (outside only – see right) and the eerily restored Tobacco Dock. We also visit Hawksmoor's St George's in the east, which was bombed in the war and now combines part of the great 18th century architecture with a light modern interior.

#### Times

We meet at 10.50 am at Shadwell DLR station exit for an 11am start. The tour lasts around two hours and will finish near Wapping tube station, where there are cafes and toilets.



#### Cost

£6, payable by cheque in advance.

#### Travel

Shadwell DLR station

**Booking** is essential. Please use adjacent form.

### Royal Academy of Music Museum

(and lunchtime concert)

Marylebone Road

London NW1 5HT

Tuesday 12 February

The Royal Academy of Music is Britain's senior conservatoire. The museum opened in 1823 and is housed in a building designed by John Nash as part of the formal approach to Regent's Park. We have arranged a conducted tour by an academy guide of highlights of the academy's world-renowned collection of instruments, manuscripts, objects and images.

#### Facilities and access

There are onsite toilets, café and restaurant.

#### Times

We meet at 10.15am in the café or 10.35 for a 10.45 start at the museum entrance. Our tour will last around 60 minutes, after which we have the option of a leisurely lunch. We can also stay on to



attend the 1pm lunchtime concert – programme to be decided; see RAM website nearer the time.

#### Cost

£2, payable by cheque in advance. Concert is free.

#### Travel

**Underground:** Regent's Park (Bakerloo line) or Baker Street (Bakerloo, Jubilee, Metropolitan, Hammersmith & City and Circle lines). Then a short walk along Marylebone Road.

**Bus:** Numbers 27, 30, 88, 205 and 453 stop immediately outside the Royal Academy of Music. Buses stopping nearby, at Baker Street underground station: 2, 13, 74, 82, 113, 139, 189, 274.

**Booking** is essential – please use adjacent form.

# Away days booking form

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Membership number \_\_\_\_\_  
*Block letters please. No more than two application names per form.*

Phone No \_\_\_\_\_

Date	Name of visit

- Cheques payable to NLU3A
- Send booking form and cheque to Sue Teller at 4 The Gin Palace, 36 Market Road, London N7 9PW. A separate cheque is required for each visit.
- You will be notified **by phone if you have a place (or not)** on the visit and your cheque will be banked or destroyed accordingly.
- If you are unable to attend the visit, please phone Sue Teller on 7609 5172 so that your place can be offered to another member.

## U3A summer schools 2013

Two summer schools will be running in 2013 from 15 to 18 July at Harper Adams, University College, Newport, Shropshire, and from 19 to 22 August at the Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester.

Details and application forms are available from Hilda Wilson, secretary of North London U3A, 29 Curzon Road, London N10 2RB, telephone 8442 0567. You can also download them from the U3A national website at [www.u3a.org.uk](http://www.u3a.org.uk). When applying to Hilda, **please send a stamped self-addressed envelope of A5 (C5) size**, as there are several sheets of A4 paper in the application.

### Courses at Harper Adams

- Art of the 20th century – from Fauvism to post-modernism
- Cinema history – film directors in focus
- Current affairs – political and social studies
- Design principles in art – exploring the element of colour
- France – *regards sur la France actuelle*
- Geology – the legacy of the Ice Age on the Cheshire/Shropshire Plain
- History – the golden age of Rome: from Augustus to Hadrian
- Poetry: ‘I saw eternity the other night’
- Recorder ensemble playing

### Courses at Royal Agricultural College

- Architecture – Palladian architecture in 17th and 18th century Britain
- Digital photography – artistic re-creation
- Drama – argumentative and passionate
- History – fiction & reality: ‘a passage to more than India’ with tutor Krishna Dutta
- Literature – Jane Austen & the English landscape
- Music – Shakespeare & music – an exploration and evaluation
- Short and sweet? – the art of the short ‘story’
- Singing for pleasure
- Theatre history – from the Greeks to the 20th century

# Monthly meetings in the spring term



All take place at St Paul's Church,  
50 Long Lane, Finchley N3 2PU  
Refreshments from 10.15am



## Monday 14 January Plants and climate change

Jeff Duckett, emeritus professor of botany at the Natural History Museum, will explore the effects of plants on climate change over 480 million years and of human activities recently.

## Monday 11 February Are women human? Working for the rights and status of women around the world

Janet Swinney will speak about Womankind Worldwide, which is an international development organisation with a specific focus on the welfare and rights of women. It works in some of the poorest countries in the world, supporting local partners to develop programmes relevant to their particular environment and to help women better their lives.



## Monday 11 March Iris Murdoch and Zen Buddhism

The don't-know mind – the mind which is not filled with knowing but is open to what there is – this is the basis of Zen. Anne Bancroft, author of *Women in Search of the Sacred*, will describe how it pleased Iris Murdoch, and its practices of full attention and awareness brought her to Buddhism.

**There is no monthly meeting in April**

**Term  
dates**

Term	Start	Finish
Spring	7 January 2013	29 March 2013
Summer	29 April 2013	19 July 2013