

NEWS4U ! - THE SMALL ONE FOR DIAL-UPPERS.

- all the news from the newsletter , without file-consuming graphics. March 2011

Welcome to our new President, Bob Welham !

We were all very sad to see the retiring President, David, leave the stage at the AGM.. David has done so much for our U3A that we shall always be grateful. But taking his place in the Hot Seat, we are very fortunate to welcome Bob. But WHO is he? When asked this very question, this is the answer he gave us

I was born Essex 1949, which I know is difficult to believe. I am 61 years old and have to carry my passport to confirm this. I moved to West Midlands when 4yrs old and was allowed to stay there throughout my formative years until in my 20's. I then progressed in Department store management in the Midlands and the North East.

The travel lust started and I then worked in Saudi Arabia , developing retail operations for 6 years, where I was able to pursue my interest in Scuba diving and illegal wine making. An experience I would not have missed. (My Arabic is possibly better than my Spanish!) Upon my return to UK, a change of career enabled me to train in Audiology, where I worked for Boots the Chemist and the NHS.

Only two years ago, I retired and sped my way to sunny Spain. I have always had a great interest in travel, having been across most of Europe, USA, West Indies, Sri Lanka, Bangkok, Singapore, China and Australia. Still on my list of places to visit are New Zealand, South America, Vietnam, Brunei, Japan and Hull! (Mary Whitfield will get me a visa) My hobbies include scuba diving, cinema and telling stories and of course travel.

I am now looking forward to my time in the president's seat, knowing full well that I shall be kept very busy but will enjoy it.

All members should have had an email by this time with full minutes of the AGM.. If not, contact the Secretary. The Treasurer's annual accounts will shortly be available on the website, along with full contact details for all the new committee.

David has asked that we print his final report in full, as there are so many people he wants to thank :

President's Annual Report.

Once again I find myself at the end of our legal year. It seems as yesterday I was penning the last report, though much has happened over the past twelve months. The Treasurer Rod has been able to resolve many of the wrinkles in our system. With Eve our Deputy Treasurer the system of receipts and expenses paperwork has been re-designed to facilitate fiscal rectitude and complete openness. Not a small feat, but a clear and welcome protection of our money.

Once again Mike our Membership secretary has organised the rejoining of members as well as the recruiting of new members. Membership still hovers around the 400 mark, which involves a surprising amount of personal commitment on the part of Mike. We are lucky that Carol Sluce agreed to help Mike with the heavy load so we welcome Carol into the team as assistant Membership Secretary.

Angela our Group Coordinator has once again driven the group organisation forward with the help of Harry. We have seen a small growth in the number of groups from 42 to 44. Consolidation has been the watchword, for example the Digital Photo group has been limping along, but with diligence the team have found a new leader whose drive is pushing the group from strength to strength. Angela will not be standing for re-election so I offer a special thanks for all the good work she has accomplished over the past two and a bit years. We are lucky to have an able deputy in Harry who has indicated his willingness to continue.

The Travel Group under the able direction of Anne, has continued to expand its activities. There have been trips to IKEA, Bocarent, Villajoyosa, Peniscola and Benidorm Palace. They have organised two dinners, the Christmas bash as well as one for Valentine's day. Bowling has taken place throughout the year, as have the quiz evenings, both including a meal. There have been a number of Barn dances, again with refreshment. They jointly organised a delightful evening on the beach when we joined with Oliva U3A for the annual fiesta. In fact few weeks go by without some activity organised by the TCP.. Thanks to Irene and Terry, Ann and Derek, Sharlotte and Brian, Sandra, Liz, and of course Anne Hawker. Thanks to you all.

Publicity has been in the hands of Bruno throughout the year, and with his special linguistic skills, he has kept us in the public eye as well as being an invaluable link with our Spanish hosts.

As usual I have nothing but praise for the News Letter team. Byron started the year as Editor with Jazz ably assisting, and we were treated to a series of newsletters, both informative and entertaining. I still believe the Vall del Pop newsletter is one of the best, if not the best amongst the U3A's. Due to pressure of work, Byron stood down as Editor at the latter part of last year and the Editor's job has been taken over by Jazz. Fortunately Patrick Thorpe has stepped forward and so we have a new Assistant Editor. Many thanks to Byron, the man who launched the newsletter in the first place. The last three issues have been produced by Jazz with the help of Patrick, it seems as if we have struck gold once again, for the high standard set by Byron continues.

As usual Colin as Web Master has kept up the standard of our web site. Having set the site up originally Colin has applied himself to reshaping it into a simpler form. With the help of Heidi and Mike, both computer experts, they have shaped a site capable of maintenance by us mortals. Colin will not be standing in the coming elections and so is due special thanks for all his work of setting it up, running it so efficiently, and now redesigning it into a simpler form. We must also give thanks to Heidi and Mike, both Titans of the computer, for helping Colin and also being prepared to continue the hard slog.

The committee has been busy throughout the year seeking to support the group leaders and organising venues where necessary. We have also been able, by using the wish list, to give financial help to aid group development. The money has helped the Computer Group buy a small computer. This machine is also available for use by other groups. The Mosaic groups have been aided in the purchase of machinery, a white board for the Spanish conversation. This and more, as we have also been able to reduce the subscriptions from 12€ to 10€ We have also overseen changes in the Constitution, made to ease the management of our finances, and to allow the TCP to manage its own Bank Account. We have held meetings with the U3A's in our area in order to improve our relations, and though progress has not been all we would have wished, we have been able to coordinate our travel activities.

Throughout the year we have worked closely with the local Ayuntamientos and must give special thanks to the Mayors of Benissa, Lliber, Jalon, Alcalali, Parcent, Murla, and Castell de Castells. All of who have provided us with facilities to further our activities. We still have not found a way of repaying this help, though a donation approved by the last General meeting, is to be made to the School in Alcalali. I trust we will find other ways we can show our appreciation over the coming years,

THANK YOU DAVID !

David was presented with a lifetime membership award at the AGM, in recognition of all his months of hard work as President. But he has not given up on the U3A. As Elder Statesmen do, he has become our Cross-Culture Ambassador, negotiating on our behalf with local Councils and Town Halls.

YOUR NEW COMMITTEE

During the next few months, we shall attempt to tell members who's who on the new committee. This is the full list (contact details on the website soon.). Any suggestions for discussion at committee meetings can always be put into the suggestion box at General Meetings.

Bob Welham, President, with **Peter Ryan**, as Vice President

Sandra Welham, Secretary, with **Graham Quirk** as Assistant.

Rod Waspe as Treasurer, with **Eve Fisk** as Assistant

Harry Roskoss as Groups Co-ordinator, with **Jean Watson** assisting

Mike Hawker as Membership Secretary, assisted by **Carol Sluce**

Bruno Goffin on the Publicity, **Annie Hawker** on the Travel, **Heidi**

Morgan and Mike Burke looking after the website, with **Jazz** and **Pat Thorpe** putting the Newsletter together.

The Digital Photography Group goes 'Around Alcalali'

'I've seen parts of Alcalali I didn't know existed' was a comment from one of the members of the digital photography group which spent a warm but windy Tuesday afternoon following an interesting route round and through this historical valley pueblo.

Colin Ackerman, the group leader and a professional fashion photographer, as well as an accomplished teacher of the art of photography, took the group through his photographic check list, guaranteed to provide the best chance of a good image result, in the Plaza Major. This practical lesson brought together the classroom talks which had taken place over the previous weeks.

After the demonstration of 'how to get it right (most of the time)' an enthusiastic group set off to put what they had learned into practice by finding their own special images around the streets and houses of the old pueblo. It was apparent early on that you had to look up as well as around, as there were many interesting subjects located high on walls and which could easily be missed without a bit of neck craning!

Cameras were worked pretty hard as group members used them as they had never done before, having learned a lot more about the features of their chosen models. Some had even got around to reading the instruction manuals from cover to cover, something which many camera owners never achieve!

Colin will be reviewing the results of the afternoon's efforts at a subsequent class when members will submit their chosen best six images for his critical appraisal – always an educational and useful, if nerve-wracking, session.

The Digital Photography Group is always happy to welcome new members.

From El Barbardo

Beware the Palm Beetle !

We have probably all seen a lot in the local newspapers about the dangerous Palm Beetle which is invading our area. The Town Hall of Teulada/Moraira have issued interesting information online. You must take action if you see these pests in order to save your (and other) trees. The latest in the local press is that very soon there will be a product on sale in Garden Centres for injecting into the trees.

DID YOU KNOW ??

We have had a suggestion from Michael Bulleid to include a regular feature in the Newsletter called "Did you Know?". What a good idea! Michael has started us off with a few facts of his own, so please let us have any interesting information you think other members would like to hear ..

- AVOID LAWYERS' FEES.

For advice, call English-speaking notary, Amador in Orba. Contact via Brenda Smethurst of u3a on 96 648 20 43
- Need a new Assessor for your Tax Return? Try the shop on corner of garage(initials unknown to my memory!!) 50 euros .
- You can buy a variety of gadgets to copy Vinyl and Cassettes to computer or MP3, from www.telegraphhome.co.uk/earllyspring

HAPPY BIRTHDAY PEPE !

Is this our oldest member? 90-year old "Pepe" Chapman celebrated his **90th** birthday last month at La Pista in Jalon. Someone there 10 years ago at the 80th celebration was heard to say " he celebrated his 80th birthday by announcing his intention to go to live in Spain—what will he announce on his 90th??" The question was answered—he invited everyone present to reconvene at the same place for his 100th in 10 years time!

NEW OPPORTUNITIES TO SAVE MONEY WITH OUR U3A DISCOUNTS.

PAINTING AND DECORATING

ABRACADABRA – lady decorators. Ali and Lyn will come to you together to tackle your internal decorating jobs (and outside jobs too if they don't involve huge bits of scaffolding!) 10% off if you show your current membership card.
Ring 689 427 017 or email a.gill1@yahoo.co.uk

SATELLITE AND TELEVISION

CRYSTAL CLEAR is an Orba-based family company personally recommended by members. At least 5% discount to members. Steve Wood will come to you promptly, to cheerfully face up to all your satellite TV and telecoms challenges! Look at the website at www.ccsattv.com, or ring 96 558 4097.

100 %

100% Plumbing and 100% construction offer a whole, all-round local service and will give U3A members discounts. See the website for details, or phone 8.30 to 5pm 965 835 939

Did you know that the wonderful Marnes Iris Gardens (near Pinos) open from 1st April through to 31st May ?

During this time you can see all the varieties of Tall Bearded Irises - early, middle and late blooming. A real riot of colour in early May especially. Even if you visit early or late during the opening season there are many, many different plants to admire in the extensive and beautifully maintained gardens. Plenty of benches to rest on whilst you stroll round. There are irises and roses for sale and other wonderful which you will see displayed growing in the Gardens. There is no admission charge but donations are gratefully received. Make a day of it and have lunch at one of the nearby restaurants overlooking the Penon and coast. Go to www.iris-lomer.com

Four Day trip to Barcelona

13--16th September 2011. Cost €235. per person. Bed and Breakfast.

Day One.

This four day trip will include travelling to Barcelona with a stop at Tarragona for lunch(not included) and a chance to have an hour free time. Arriving at the Hotel Rialto (3 star) situation in the heart of the city, at about 4.00pm. Check in and free time for the rest Of the day.

Day Two

After breakfast, a guided tour of the city (by coach) to include a visit to the Temple de La Sagrada Familia- where we will have the opportunity to stop and look around. The morning tour will finish at about 12.30 leaving us free for the rest of the day to explore, shopping and lunch. (Not included.)

Day Three

After breakfast, a free day for you to discover the delights of Barcelona.

Day Four

After breakfast pack and board coach for return journey at approx 9.30. On our way back we will stop at Montserrat to visit the monastery and continue to Sant Sadurni with a visit to the famous Cava wine cellar. (Entrance and tasting included). Arriving back in Jalon early evening.

A deposit of 50€is required to reserve your place.. A single supplement of 20€is also payable.

Telephone: Sandra on 965581353 or email bob.welham@gmail.com

Jalon Valley Help May Fayre.... Sunday 15th May . Can you help?

*We have booked a stall for this event.
What we need now are your ideas?
Let us know your fund raising idea.*

*Let Sandra know 96558135 or
email secretary@u3avalldelpop.com*

Items of interest for the Newsletter should be sent to Pat Thorpe at pands_thorpe@hotmail.com on or before the General Meeting. Word documents please—and no more than 200 words.

The Pop-in-group would like to borrow any talking books please.
Michael 96 55 02 01 3

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

We are very lucky to have 44 groups in our U3A ! See the website for all the details. If anyone has an idea for a new group, have a word with the Groups Co-ordinator, Harry, to see what can be done.

You don't have to be an expert on anything in order to be a group leader.

Do you yearn to play the guitar? We have the opportunity for beginners' guitar lessons starting in May. Contact Harry if you are interested.

HOW WAS IT FOR YOU ? This has been our first attempt at a thoroughly pared-down Newsletter, especially for all those who have trouble downloading. We would appreciate everyone's feedback—please email editor@u3avalldelpop.com

WHAT'S ON ?

Our Travel and Culture People always have a whole variety of events organised for us - check the website for the latest news. Click on Groups, then on Travel.

MARCH 19TH

The Metropolitan Opera live via HD transmission to the Yelmo Cinema. Alicante. Donizetti, Lucia de Lammermoor starring Natalie Dessay and Joseph Calleja. 7pm. With sufficient numbers going, the cost will be only 12€ This is organised by the Cinema Group, so contact David Garside on 966 482 435.

MARCH 24TH

Day trip to Elche for culture or shopping – you decide ! Only 10€ Details from Liz. 965058451 or 686276397

APRIL 1ST.

Gilbert & Sullivan at the Casa de Cultura in Calpe. HMS PINAFORE. 8pm.. Call Sharlotte and Brian on 600 280 669

APRIL 2nd.

Monte Pego Theatre Company present MIXED DOUBLES, - a comedy on marriage. The 12€ticket includes a free drink ! (It may even be cheaper if enough people book!). At Rafol Theatre. Details from Derek and Anne. 966 481 069 after 5pm.

APRIL 14th

Day trip to Valdigna, El Palmar, a boat trip on the Albufera Lake, and plenty more. 20€. Contact Sandra 965 581 353.

MAY 3rd.

3-day 2-night Trip to Cartagena in 4-star hotel a few minutes walk from the beach. Breakfasts and Evening meal plus a spa visit included for only 99.50€/per person. Now fully booked, but Annie has a waiting list. 965 732 771

JUNE 9TH

Day trip to Alicante to enjoy a day out sightseeing, shopping or adding a little culture to your life! 10€ Call Sandra.965 581 353

JUNE 10th.

QUIZ NIGHT ! Bat Nou, Senija at 7.30. Only 10€includes the marvellous fish and chips, AND prizes! Teams of 4 drawn from a

FUTURE U3A GENERAL MEETINGS

APRIL 7TH Demonstration from the Tai Chi Group

MAY 5TH Carlos and Virginia talk about “Moviments”, a co-operative in Murla selling organic produce.

JUNE 2ND Talk by a physiotherapist who specialises in working with animals.

HOH ! - HELP OUR HEROES !

Keith Deacon (who is a U3A member) is a keen supporter of the charity Help for Heroes and has been organising a series of fund raising events for this very worthwhile cause.

One of his future events is to be an

AUCTION at EL CID in BENIDOLEIG. This will be held on 22nd April. He is keen to collect as many goods as possible to auction on the day.

If anyone has items that you would like to donate to this very worthy cause ,please contact

Keith on 96 558 1472

CONCERTS AT PALAU ALTEA

(Just Google for details)

30 March: AIDA price 30 euros; Ukranian Company; live; not David's link to the very best!!

9 April: Saxophone Quartet; varied programme; price 10 euros

10 April Music and songs from Columbia; Peru; Argentina; Spain. FREE