

THE THIRD AGE TRUST



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

U3A Jazz Appreciation Network

Subject co-ordinator – Mike Whitaker

26 Parkfield Close, North Petherton, Bridgwater, Somerset. TA6 6QY

01278 663492 - 07802 769362

mjo.whitaker666@btinternet.com or mjowhitaker38@gmail.com

Twitter - @Mjo_Whitaker

2017/1 (Christmans/New Year)

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Hi jazz lovers all,

This was supposed to be an Autumn Newsletter but as one long-time member has said, my newsletters are 'steadfastly irregular'.

Let me get to the important bit first – who would like to be U3A National Jazz Adviser? I have held this post since October 2010 and I'm now even older and more knackered than I was then. What's involved ? Here is the job description:-

Main role

- To provide guidance for members who want to start an Interest Group in your subject.
- To provide advice to existing group leaders/convenors who may be experiencing difficulties.
- To provide information to groups on available resources where appropriate.

NB This does not include providing advice on insurance or on any matter which is a policy matter/decision for the committee of the individual U3A to decide.

Additional duties (if you want to)

- To produce a newsletter
- To develop a means for interest groups to interact with each other and share best practice e.g. by means of a subject blog.
- To participate in a regional/network study day
- To lead a national study day
- To tutor at summer school.

In return we will :-

- Give you all the support you need to fulfil your role
- Pay expenses in accordance with our guidelines.

Let me know if you're interested or want more details.

Playing Groups.

(by which I mean jazz interest groups that get together to PLAY, rather than listen to recordings)

The June *Third Age Matters (TAM)* mentioned some of these, including Ray Wilson's St Albans band and Nick Carter's West Midlands Big Band. This led to a flurry of contacts from people who were interested, who wanted to talk to others who were interested or who were looking for someone to play with (an inelegant way of putting it but you know what I mean). Here's a round-up. Some are U3A bands, others are bands with some U3A members, some are individual members looking for like-minded souls..

Ray Wilson's St Albans band – have a look at his web page – <https://j3asite.wordpress.com>.

Email - wilsonranda@ntlworld.com.

Nick Carter's West Midlands Big Band. I believe Nick is still interested in potential players – email bigband@balsallcommonu3a.org

The Swindon U3A Dance Band has been going for a while now and is very successful. The leader is George Connell – email georgeconnell181@gmail.com . If you Google Swindon U3A Dance Orchestra you'll be led to some Youtube clips.

Then there's the Gosport U3A Swing Band – contact - john.taylor177@ntlworld.com. Or go to the Gosport U3A web site.

John Telford of Leicester U3A has formed a band. Its members are mostly of U3A age though not members. jtelford@ntlworld.com

John Morris of Burton-on-Trent U3A has emailed me to tell me about their band 'Count Us in'. They have a waiting list as they don't want to get any bigger – but if there's anybody willing enough and competent enough to lead a second band, they could split. john-morris@talktalk.net

Peter Stafford of Shipston-on-Stour U3A sent me this: - 9 piece band " Pavilionaies" weekly Thursday rehearsals in Brailes Pavilion @ 2pm. Concert arranged for U3A AGM in May 2017.

New group "Incognito" [dms, pno ,bass, ts, tpt] Launched in June for Shipston Proms. Rehearsing 3 times a month on Tuesdays in Brailes Pavilion @ 2pm.
Looking for gigs to give focus and experience - [very competent musicians]. Monthly concerts in Brailes Village Hall by visiting groups and musicians - all live performances.

Go to the Shipston U3A web page for details or email rosemarystafford@ymail.com

Winston Senior of Hale & District U3A (Altrincham, Cheshire) is a member of The Wellington Street Stompers and he'd like to make contact with like-minded members in the area. The band has a website – www.gentlejazz.co.uk and there's a clip on Youtube. Email him at winstonsenior96@gmail.com

Shaun Heffernan of Clitheroe U3A got in touch. Shaun is the drummer in a band called Jazz Junction. The band is prepared to travel within 25 miles or so from Blackburn area. All are experienced musos but the band is relatively new. 'We love

playing and are very keen to entertain (we're not just navel gazing jazzers)' says Shaun, 'Please feel free to show my email address (shaunrv63@gmail.com) and telephone number (01254 247427).' If your U3A wants a live performance at a jazz appreciation meeting or for a U3A celebration, do contact Shaun.

Then there's the South Bucks Jazz band (High Wycombe area). This is a group of 12 musicians who are 'an enthusiastic group of mixed ability musicians all seeking to unlock the door to making jazz.' I haven't got a contact but I see from the U3A's web page that they are looking for a vocalist. Go to the web page for more details.

Edmond Kaye contacted me – Edmond is an alto player who's just moved to Waltham Abbey. Anybody know of a rehearsal band or similar in the area? edmondk70@icloud.com

Aprile Briggs of Worthing U3A is a singer/pianist. She says 'I am a semi pro jazz singer, having both run a quartet singing with pros and sung with a Big Band for many years. Also played jazz piano with small combos. Have retired from bands where I had to travel a lot. I am looking to join a jazz band playing mostly in my local Worthing area, West Sussex or Brighton'. Email her at aprilejazz@gmail.com

Here's another singer – Carol Seaforth. Carol writes: 'Hello, I am a U3A member in Dunmow, Essex. I am a jazz/blues, with a little soul, singer. Is there a band in this area? I have been singing with a guitarist for the odd gig, but I would prefer to sing in a band. I have been singing since I was nine years of age...a looong time ago!' Email carolseaforth@hotmail.com

Are you all aware of the fact that 2017 **marks the centenary of Ella Fitzgerald's birth?** Singer Maureen Connett of Hastings & Rother U3A certainly is. Maureen loves singing Ella's music and feels that U3A should celebrate such an important landmark. Is there anyone in the Kent/Sussex area who would like to join Maureen in putting on a show ? Contact Maureen - maureen_connett@yahoo.co.uk

Bob Cox from East Grinstead writes to tell me about The Institute Jazz band. They play for the local U3A. On the 2nd Monday every month. Trad jazz at its best. Established 15 years. Contact bob.cox@sky.com

Geoff Iredale of Bicester wants to contact amateur musicians or musicians who only play occasionally to play and rehearse together. Geoff suggests people in the Bicester, Brackley, Buckingham & Banbury U3A areas. Contact Geoff - eilver@aol.com

This from Danny Murphy – 'I play tenor saxophone and I'd love to find out more about jazz bands that I could (possibly) play with. I'm a member of the Droitwich U3A Windband and enjoy playing all sorts of music. I'm happy to travel and keen to get going.' - dannymurphy12@btinternet.com

And now for something different. - **A Virtual Jazz presentation**

Bob Nicholls leads Great Yarmouth U3A's jazz appreciation group. One of his members, Ray Taylor, has developed a virtual presentation, based on YouTube clips. This is similar to Janet Webb's Virtual Blues group (which, by the way, is now over-subscribed). Periodically, Ray emailed a virtual presentation to the group's members. He discussed a topic – guitar, vibes, jazz takes on the classics etc – and added links to the relevant YouTube clips. The idea was that members would watch the clips and comment on them. Ray, however, was disappointed with the response.

Bob emailed me the presentations and I was impressed. Ray highlighted music of interest, much of it material that we might not know about (the jazz *oeuvre* is so huge all of us can always find something new). The level of discussion was what I would hope of a U3A group. In particular, I enjoyed discovering the French Anachronic Jazzband. (Thanks Ray!) Although Ray was disappointed by his local response, I believe that the idea is worthy of consideration by any J A G. If any U3A wants to follow up the idea, email Bob Nicholls (bobnicholls55@uwclub.net) for details. I'm sure he'll be able to email you an example and you can develop the idea from there.

On the subject of **virtual groups**, Peter Beckley of Crawley U3A would be very interested in joining a second Blues one (you'll see above that Janet Webb's original one is full). Peter is unable to commit the time to setting one up but if there are people out there already forming such a group, do get in touch with him.
peter.beckley@yahoo.co.uk

OK – now from digital to very analogue - George Foster has found a cache (over 100) of **Trad cassettes**. Who wants them? Some of them may have been copied from radio. They are at Leominster, Hereford, but could be brought to west London. Email george.foster@btinternet.com (I did warn George not to get too excited...)

And even more analogue...John Dando of Glastonbury has a mountain of **Jazz Journals** (200 or so) to shift. Anybody want them? If so let me know.

You will know from previous Newsletters that I am always extolling the virtues of the monthly online jazz magazine www.sandybrownjazz.co.uk Well, I'm continuing to extol – do visit the site and get it in your favourites.

I came across another the other day www.jazzandjazz.com Give it a look. And do make sure you're subscribed to the National Jazz Archive for their regular Newsletters - <https://www.nationaljazzarchive.co.uk/>

Londoners – do you subscribe to <http://www.jazzlondonlive.com/> You'll get email alerts to a vast array of live gigs in the London area. I think I got 85 one weekend...if only I still lived in London!

Well, that's it for now. The Christmas cards have just come down, the tree lights have been untangled and shoved up in the roof but there are still piles of mince pies, Christmas pud's and Christmas cake left to see off. I really do hope all of you had the sort of Christmas you hoped for.

If you're interested in becoming the next U3A national jazz adviser, do get in touch.

All the very best to all of you for a peaceful, event-free and music filled 2017

Mike Whitaker