



# U3A Ireland

Age Action

IRELAND

For All Older People

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Ann Neville, Development Officer U3A

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# Welcome to U3A

Welcome to the January edition of the U3A Ireland Newsletter. We have a packed issue full of items of interest to U3A groups, with many stories and suggestions sent in by U3As. We are always looking for new material, so if you have had a particularly successful event and would like to tell us about it, we would be delighted to include it in future issues of U3A Ireland. 2008 is the year of e-inclusion throughout Europe. E-inclusion is the term used by the European Union to denote their policy that computers and Information Technology generally should be accessible for everyone, no matter what their age. The Irish Government shares this view and

wants to increase the number of households with computers and internet access at home. It has therefore launched its **Home Computing Initiative** which offers a complete computing package, with a three-year warranty, three-year anti-virus software and full Microsoft Office suite. To ensure that this package is affordable for everyone payment is made through your local credit union at €7 per week. For more information contact 01 4396884 or visit your local credit union. For those of you who want to improve your computer skills, Dublin City University's School of Education is running an eight-week course specially designed for older people. Taking

place on Saturday mornings from February to April this year, it consists of two modules so students can choose either **The Benefits of Information Technology for Older and Younger people Today**, which offers an introduction to computing skills, or **Understanding the Media Today**. If you are interested in participating or would like further information you can contact Trudy Corrigan, Lecturer/Coordinator, School of Education Studies, Dublin City University, Phone: 01 7007865 or Email: trudy.corrigan@dcu.ie Wishing you and yours a very happy and prosperous New Year. **Ann Neville, U3A Development Officer**

## U3A Foyle - Walks Book Launched

**U3A Foyle - Walks Book Launched**  
The walking group of U3A Foyle in Northern Ireland have recently

seen the descriptions of their weekly walks published in book and eBook format. The group have been

walking weekly for over 15 years under the guidance of the animator Sam Mitchell. In 1998 Sam gathered his

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## Let's Walk and Talk – Dublin City Council Walking Group



A recent study focussing on the fitness and activity levels of older people in Ireland found that nearly 60% took no exercise, and of those who do take part regularly in sport and other physical activity, only 15% are doing enough to maintain and improve their health. For this reason, initiatives such as U3A Maynooth's decision to begin every meeting with a walk is to be welcomed. For those of you interested in walking and learning more about Dublin's history, a new initiative

of Dublin City Council, will be of interest. **Let's Walk and Talk** was started earlier last year as part of the Lord Mayor's Initiative **Embracing Ageing in the City**. It offers guided walks which take place three times a week at different locations in the city.

- The walks take place every Tuesday, meeting at 2pm outside the Barge Pub in Charlemont Street to walk along the canal and surrounding areas.
- On Wednesdays, meeting at 2pm outside Raheny Dart Station for a walk through St. Anne's Park, to Bull Island or to Dollymount Strand.
- On Sundays meeting at 2pm at the Parkgate Street entrance to the Phoenix Park for a walk in the Park.

The initiative has proven to be highly successful with groups av-

eraging some 20 people, all of whom are over 50. To expand the programme Dublin City Council recently sponsored some individuals from the groups to undertake the Sli na Slainte Walking Leader training course to become Walk Leaders.

Also, to compliment the weekly walks, leading historian and author, Pat Liddy, is often invited along to lead the walks and add an historical perspective to the event. The next series of historical walking tours will take place during the first week of February.

All weekly walks and historical walking tours last some 90 minutes, are free of charge and are a great way to stay healthy, learn something and meet people.

For further information on Dublin City Council walking tours and groups, please contact Ronan O'Donnell on 2223726 or email [ronan.o'donnell@dublincity.ie](mailto:ronan.o'donnell@dublincity.ie)

## U3A Foyle - Walks Book Launched

**Cont. from Pg1....**

notes, maps and drawings into book format and had them published under the title "Country Roads".

The book proved very popular with members and the wider public and was quickly sold out.

They approached the Western Investing for Health Partnership (WifH) for help, pointing out that walking was an excellent way of promoting health. WifH agreed and provided financial support for the new publication – "Country Roads Revisited"

The publication of the eBook on CD is an innovative venture produced from Sam's text by regular



The Author Sam Mitchell at the launch of the book with U3A Foyle chair, Gabrielle Dean and eBook producer Pat Deery

walker and U3A Foyle member Pat Deery who has a background in computing.

The full text and map of each walk can be read directly on a PC screen or printed out on sheets that can be conveniently taken on the outing.

In addition the CD includes over 100 full colour photographs taken on the walks to illustrate the beauty of the surrounding countryside.

The book and eBook each cost £8 and may be purchased at the U3A Foyle building in person or by post from

**The Treasurer, U3A Foyle,  
Pascal McDonald House,  
Gransha Park,  
Derry,  
Northern Ireland, BT47 6TG.**

## Members Voice

In October a group from Lucan U3A spent almost a week in the Old Town of Krakow, Poland, admiring the magnificent buildings and the green spaces in the old city. On such a short visit there was much we could neither see nor fully appreciate but we are left with many impressions and will watch with interest the changes that must come with the full integration of Poland into the European Union.

Krakow was spared much of the devastation of the Second World War. While there are old buildings in excellent condition many need restoration. For some it is plaster and paint, or the eradication of graffiti which is very prevalent. The European Regional Development Fund will need to be called in to help with road and footpath re-surfacing.

Signs of Russian occupation are still there – the architecture (mainly in the newer part of Krakow) or the lack of litter (packaging is a modern phenomenon of the wealthier countries).

We saw few of the older generation on the streets but many young people. We were struck in particular by the good looks of all the sales staff in the shops and restaurants.

There was no trouble in making en-



**St. Mary's Church, Krakow**

quiries in English, provided it was to a young person. They all knew what we were talking about! There are many very good quality restaurants in the Old Town though, perhaps this is a good thing, service was not rushed!

Markets are still going strong. The Cloth Hall has been in existence since the 14<sup>th</sup> century and

is a good place to see and feel what the country is like, and a local fruit, vegetable and “whatever you like yourself” market was located across from our hotel and was a source of much interest and entertainment for us all.

Amber is one of the most noted products sold in the Cloth Market and in jewellers in the town and is very beautiful.

Our visit included a trip to the Wieliczka Salt Mines, an incredible adventure at 327 metres underground, with marvellous statues, wall carvings and chapels among the 3,000 km of gallery's. Salt was mined there from the Middle Ages until 1996. It is a World Heritage site.

We also visited Auschwitz and Birkenau, traumatic, harrowing and in so many ways unbelievable, but such a part of the history of our time.

A concert, a brief exploration of the old Jewish Quarter of Kazimierz by Krakow's version of the Luas, and much walking rounded off a most interesting few days, marred only by poor weather, particularly annoying as SKY TV kept reporting how sunny and fine it was in Dublin!

**Sue Peard, Lucan U3A**

## Members' Voice - Call for Contributions



This newsletter is for U3A members. It is about sharing ideas, stories and articles of interest. If you have attended an interesting talk, read an inspiring article or book, or enjoyed a trip away, perhaps you would like to write about it for older readers.

If you have tried anything recently that has been particularly

successful I would be delighted to hear about it.

Please send articles or details of meetings to:

Ann Neville,  
Age Action Ireland,  
30-31 Lower Camden Street,  
Dublin 2

or email [u3a@ageaction.ie](mailto:u3a@ageaction.ie)

# What's on where?

## WICKLOW HISTORIC GAOL AND THE BLACK CASTLE

Wicklow is known as the Garden of Ireland and the historic county town of Wicklow is at its centre. A visit to Wicklow's Gaol tells the story of 18th and 19th century prison life amongst the rebels who passed through the gates of the Gaol during its 200 year history. A compelling story is brought to life with the use of live re-enactments, audio visual and interactive material. Tours are about one hour long and leave a lasting impression on all who visit. The Gaol is open daily from 10am - 6 pm.

Following your visit, come out to the Market Square to view the Billy Byrne monument, erected to commemorate the heroism and sacrifices of the Wicklow Pike men of 1798. A short walk down Gallows Lane brings you to the harbour from where you see the ruins of the Black Castle, built by the Norman Fitzgerald's in 1170. This was attacked on numerous occasions by the O'Byrne and O'Toole clans. It was finally destroyed by fire in 1640. Directly

under the ruins are St Patrick's Steps, the reputed first landing place of St Patrick in Ireland in 432.

There are quite a few nice restaurants in the centre of the town where you will also come across the memorial erected to Captain Robert Halpin who laid the first trans-atlantic telegraph cable in 1866. His home was Tinnakilly, now the famous Tinnakilly House Hotel.

Making your way up toward the Grand Hotel you may wish to visit the Franciscan Friary Abbey ruins, which were constructed in the mid-13th century, confiscated in 1552 during the reign of King Edward and returned to the Wicklow Parish in 1799. Across the road, close to the Grand Hotel you will find the bus stop to take you home.

### Contact details for Wicklow

**G a o l :** 0 4 0 4 - 6 1 6 1 2

**Getting There:** Bus from Amiens Street (close to the Luas Stop at Connolly Station) right to the terminus at Market Square Wicklow. You are now at the rear wall of the Gaol. By train: this is a lovely 30-minute walk and perhaps material for another day's outing.

## U3A Meetings

### Dublin City U3A

Meet at the Chester Beatty Library at 11am on the last Tuesday of every month. Contact John Roche: (01) 2017490 or Lily Shanley: (01) 6773166

### Blessington U3A

Meet the third Tuesday of each month. Contact Aileen O'Riordan: 045 865564

### Ballyroan U3A

Meet every second Monday at 11am in Ballyroan Library. Contact Al Connor: (01) 4903212

### Sutton and Baldoyle U3A

Meet on the first and third Wednesday of the month at 2.30pm, Baldoyle library. Contact Sheila Cullen: (01) 8393868

### Ballymun Library U3A

Meet every second Monday at 2pm, except Bank Holidays. Contact Ruth Meehan: (01) 8571673.

### Blackrock U3A

Meet every Friday at 10.45am in Blackrock Education Centre. Contact Eileen Larkin: (01) 4557653

### Lucan U3A

Contact Sue Peard: (01) 6280429

### The Shanty U3A (Tallaght)

Contact Imelda Hanratty: (01) 4628491

### Maynooth U3A

Meetings are every second Friday: 11-1.00pm in the Town Library Maynooth. Contact Age Action at 01 4756989.

### Navan U3A

Contact Patricia McGooney or Deirdre McGivern: (046) 9021680.

### Active Virginians U3A

Contact John Brodie, 'The Wood', Rahardrum, Virginia, County Cavan

### Waterford U3A

Contact Terry (Theresa) Moloney - Tel 051 876542 or email [tmoloney@wit.ie](mailto:tmoloney@wit.ie)

## THIS CAN HELP US HELP YOU!



Available from your local pharmacist for only €2

- Want a list of all your medicines and medical conditions in case of an emergency? Would your family know who your pharmacist and doctor are if they were asked at A&E?
- If not then you need a Personal Information Pack (PIP). Ask your pharmacist to fill it out for you. It might just save your life!

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