

23/1/12 Notts U3A Webmasters' Meeting

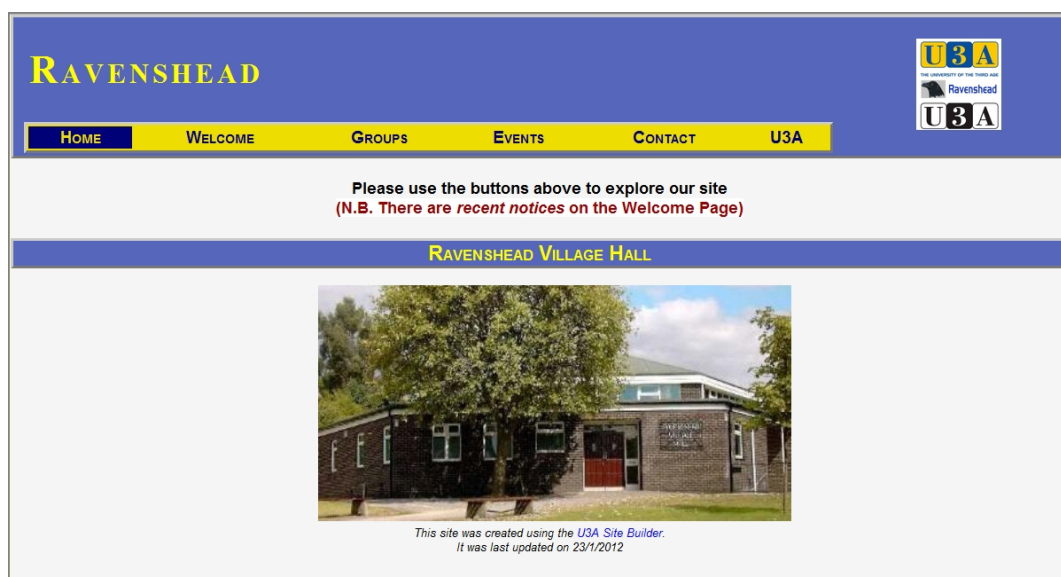
Venue: Alan Paul's house in Ravenshead

Present were:

Steve Austin ... <http://beestonu3a.org.uk/>
Peter Edge <http://www.keyworthu3a.org.uk/>
David Ling ... <http://www.mansfield-u3a.org.uk/>
Alan Paul ... <http://u3asiteb.org.uk/ravenshead>
Adrian Sumner ... <http://www.retford-u3a.org.uk/>
Robert Watts ... <http://www.sherwoodu3a-mansfieldwoodhouse.org.uk/groups.htm>

Alan started the meeting by showing us his new U3A Site-Builder website for Ravenshead, which looked very impressive ... he'd put together this website in less than a month. Consider also that this U3A is only one month old ... it's a hive of activity.

Here is the screen capture of the home page, which shows the new Site-Builder theme (you can choose different colours for the header, by the way). Alan has customised it for his U3A.



(I used Vista's Snipping tool to capture this ... it's easy-peasy to use)

Another excellent feature of this Site-Builder site is the Notice Board area on the Welcome page. You can add a time limit to each notice, after which the notice will disappear! As regards contacting group leaders, there is a new contact form facility you can set up for any group leader ... all addresses are hidden from view. Another brilliant feature is that you can also view the stats of each page viewed, to see which are your most popular webpages.

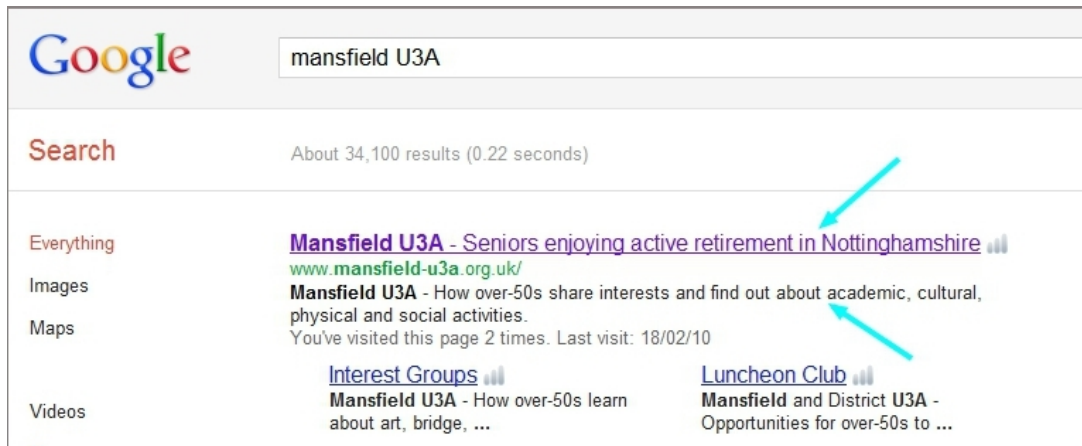
U3A Site-Builder also allows webmasters to point a domain name to the Site-Builder URL. So you could purchase a domain name such as www.ravensheadu3a.co.uk for slightly over £5 a year, from one of the web-hosting companies, e.g. Easily, and then point it towards the U3A's existing Site-Builder address. Having a domain name also enables you to create extra email addresses, eg [info@www....](mailto:info@www...) to hide an officer's email address, which you could then publish on a newsletter. A domain name ending as dot org, costs a lot more, by the way ... £25 plus VAT for 2 years.

David showed us the Flickr photo-gallery he set up for Mansfield U3A, onto which he uploads members' photos (and his own) at full size. Members are then able to download photos at full size if they so wish, to save or to get printed. Flickr displays a range of sizes you can download for each photo, so you as the webmaster could download one of the smaller sizes for website use (eg 500 / 640px size). When you're signed in, you can also copy the HTML code for the size of photo you want, and then incorporate this code into a webpage (the code acts as a link to your Flickr site photo at your chosen size). I find this useful as regards putting photos onto my blogsites. I found out recently that Flickr sharpens each photo uploaded onto it.

To join Flickr, you will need to sign up for a Yahoo account / identity, which might entail creating a Yahoo email site. (I use my Yahoo email address for my U3A contacts, only). You can put up to 200 photos

onto Flickr free of charge, and more photos if you upgrade to the Pro version, which costs about £15 a year. You could also set up another free photo-gallery service, e.g. Picasa's web-gallery.

David went on to talk about putting hidden meta-data onto the Head area of your website, to improve your Google Page Ranking, and also to create some useful text about your U3A, which would appear just below your URL on a Google search ... for example:



(I used Google Chrome's Awesome Screenshot (plus Gimp for the border) to create this)

To find such meta-data, have a look at the Mansfield U3A website, do a right mouse click on the Home page > View Source, and then have a look for the above meta-data at the top of the page. You could copy and paste this into the source page of your own site, and then edit it to suit your needs.

David said that you can also improve your Google Page Ranking by inserting a bit of HTML code like this into the Head section of your source code ...

```
<meta name="google-site-verification" content="o0VPWLem ..... Dnw6iGp2g">
```

This code is specific to Mansfield U3A, by the way. You can ask Google to generate some code for your site by googling "Webmaster tools", sign in with your Google account details (or join up for one), and then go through the verification process. David also said that creating keywords for your meta-data was of little use now, as far as Google's analytical process is concerned.

David also recommended the use of Microsoft Windows' Notepad for text-editing, as a half-way stage between Word documents and a webpage, using copy & paste for text transfer. Using Notepad will remove Word's formatting from your text.

If you're using Kompozer, and are having problems say in the middle of a webpage with the text layout, David advised marking the problem area with "XXX" ... then switch the webpage to Source View, so you can locate and have a look at the surrounding HTML code, and then hopefully correct the troublesome HTML code ... a brilliant time-saver.

At my request, David showed us how to use Cute PDF, which is an alternative way of creating a PDF document. Alan downloaded it, and then he tried printing a document, during which process Cute PDF should present an option of saving the document as a PDF file. However, I find it much easier to use Open Office to create a PDF file ... you can do something similar using Microsoft Office 2010 (and possibly with the 2007 version)... check out the options when saving text documents.

JH (myself) said a few words about the Nottingham U3A website, and a temporary one he'd set up on Angelfire – a cut-down version of the main one. I'm stopping work on the main U3A website, so I set up a smaller one, which group leaders and officers could edit if they so wished (do-it-yourself), in case no-one comes forward to be the new webmaster.

I've found it easier to create PDFs for interest group programmes, which change several times during the year, than updating webpages using Kompozer. I use Kompozer to create webpages

which change very little during the year. Our groups run on a fortnightly basis, throughout the year (though with a few exceptions). These are time-tabled as Learning Circles for Weeks [One](#) and [Two](#), and I also use one Kompozer [webpage](#) listing all the interest groups. If you look at the latter group webpage, you will see that on Tuesday, there is free space for a new group to run from 10.15 to 11.15am in Weeks One.

On the subject of time-tabling, Adrian showed us his calendar for Retford U3A group activities, which he has colour-coded. It was set up originally by the web-designer of this site.

What's On..

Retford Web Calendar Tuesday 24 January 2012 Public View

Month All Categories 24.01.2012 Log In


January 2012 - March 2012

wk	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
	16 January	17	18	19	20	21	22
03	14:00 Conversational French 14:00 Beginners French	16:00 IT Computing	14:00 Table Tennis 14:00 Card Making 14:30 Family History	Theatre - THE KING & I 14:00 Gardening 16:00 IT Computing	13:30 Scrabble 14:00 Carpet Bowls		
	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
04	10:00 Architecture 14:00 Bridge	09:30 Recorder 16:00 IT Computing	09:30 Spanish 14:00 Painting 14:00 Table Tennis	10:00 Craft 16:00 IT Computing	10:30 Singing 14:00 Carpet Bowls		
	30	31	1 February	2	3	4	5
		16:00 IT Computing	10:00 Crochet CANCELLED UFN	14:00 Poetry 16:00 IT Computing	13:30 Wine Appreciation		

Steve gave us another tour of the WordPress site he's built for Beeston U3A, which I think looks wonderful. WordPress allows you to create static webpages and also blogging-style webpages, where your entries (posts) are date-stamped. Comments have been disabled. Steve has used the popular [Twenty Ten](#) WP theme, which you can download for free. You can pay extra so as to adopt a URL without the WP name appearing in it, & pay extra to suppress any advertising (that's not your own). He has created a password-protected members' area to keep members' details private. Here is a snapshot of the top of the U3A's Home page ...

Beeston U3A

*Beeston University of the Third Age.
Educational, creative and leisure opportunities for retired people.*



BEESTON U3A
THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

Home Latest News Open Meetings Groups Group News Newsletters How to Join U3A Movement

Welcome

Welcome to the **Beeston University of the Third Age**. U3A is an autonomous self-funding co-operative of older people which enables members to share many educational, creative and leisure activities.

U3A is a wonderful organisation. All members can take from it what they want, and give to it what they can contribute. Members, through sharing their knowledge, skills and

Search

Site Statistics
4,008 Visitors

Steve has removed all the contents of the right-hand side bar, except for the site stats. Compare this with Bob Rotheram's four-column layout for the Arnold site, which Bob developed using the [Atahualpa](#) theme (another popular WP theme) ... see below.


You will recall that Bob recommended paying for web-hosting with GoDaddy.

Welcome Interest groups Members' area Join/renew Links FAQ Contact us

Arnold U3A

Learning and fun for older people

Search



U3A


'U3A' stands for 'The University of The Third Age'. It's not a university in the usual sense. Instead, it consists of self-help, self-managed, lifelong learning co-operatives all over the UK. Each local U3A is a charity in its own right, run entirely by volunteers.

Arnold U3A serves the northern fringe of Nottingham. Yes we learn, but we're more interested in having fun than gaining qualifications.

Many of us think the real life of U3A is in the **interest groups**, which meet throughout the month in different places. They're very informal, not at all scary. Once a member, you can join as many groups as you like.

Welcome

Do you live in or near Arnold, Nottingham? Are you an older person who isn't in full-time work? If so, U3A could be for you. There's lots happening, at different times on various days, so there's a good chance you'll find something interesting that fits your diary. You're welcome to just turn up at a main meeting or a new/prospective members' meeting. You'll get a friendly reception, whichever route you choose.



Arnold Methodist Church

Register

When you've joined, register to access the **members' area**. Use the form below to do this. If everything is OK, you'll receive a username and password by email.

Name

Email address

Log in


When you've registered, **click here** to log in to the members' area.

Main meetings

are held at Arnold Methodist Church, 1.30-3.30pm on the first Tuesday of each month. The building is on the corner of Front Street and Worrall Avenue.

New/prospective members' meetings

are at Wetherspoons, Arnold (opposite Wilko's), once a month on Fridays at 11.00. In 2012 meetings are on 13 January, 17 February and 16 March, with further dates to follow. Come and meet us for a coffee and further information. Contact Pat Simons on 0115 920 1160 or by **email**.



The Ernehole (Wetherspoons), Arnold

Alan showed us a YouTube video on how to build a website using Wix.com. We didn't have time to explore this properly. Here is a link to some examples of sites built using Wix ... <http://www.wix.com/sample/website>

The next meeting will be at Alan Paul's house, on Monday 5 March 2012, from 2 – 4pm. Alan has agreed to be the Contact person for this group. His phone number is: 01623 793087

Bye for now ... my thanks to everyone for your excellent advice and help.

John