

## WEA - STILL GOING STRONG AFTER 100 YEARS!

The logo for the Workers' Education Association (WEA) features the letters 'WEA' in a bold, blue, sans-serif font.

I have been most kindly offered the hospitality of this journal to tell you about the Workers' Education Association, or WEA as it is usually and rather less formally known. I expect a number of readers will already know of the organisation, by reputation, as students or even as tutors.

The WEA was founded just over a century ago in 1903 by Albert Mansbridge to promote the higher education of working men and women. This included young people who had had to leave school sometimes as young as 12. In days when social support did not exist or was limited in the extreme, young teenagers had to go out to work to help support the household. Education thus frequently had to be sacrificed. Many such school leavers realised the benefits of education and so were anxious to pursue their studies.

From its early beginnings, the WEA has developed into a National Organisation, largely voluntary based, which serves all sections of the community where there is a desire to learn. Courses and classes are held for those who wish to acquire skills and knowledge which will have relevance in the workplace, in Community Learning (for example for ethnic minorities), or for those who merely want to study for the sake of it. Students in the latter category are often of more mature years who take pleasure in augmenting knowledge acquired at school.

Bromley Branch is offering a varied selection of classes beginning in the autumn and starting from Monday, 19 September 2005. Subjects include:

- Current Affairs: The World This Week
- Theatre Appreciation
- Music and Society
- Architecture – Magic of the Renaissance
- The Geology and Scenery of Britain's Islands
- History: The Later Stuarts 1660 - 1714
- The Art of the Northern Renaissance

Classes are held at the Ripley Arts Centre, 24 Sundridge Avenue, Bromley, where disabled access is available.

For anyone interested in finding out more, brochures detailing courses being run by Branches in the south of the London Region can be obtained from Bromley Central Library or its local branches, or direct from the Bromley Branch Representative:  
Daphne Ward - Tel. 020 8650 9066 who will be delighted to provide details of dates, times and fees.

I hope some of you will be sufficiently intrigued to enquire further and that you will be tempted to try out a class or two. Please note that early enrolment is advisable. I hope to meet some of you in the future.

**Colin Ennis**  
**Chairman - WEA Bromley Branch**