

Newsletter



Town Gardens
Photograph by
Geoff Bryan

October 2018

Chairman's Report for October 2018 Newsletter

Management Committee News

(covering May, June And July)

Three Training Workshops for Group Organisers were held in June, with a mop-up session in July for people who had missed out. They covered the new General Data Protection Regulations as well as the financial regulation requirements advised by the U3A Trust and Charity Commissioners. The sessions were generally well received and Organisers appreciated the extent of the briefings. Only two Organisers (representing four Groups) failed to attend.

As a result of the new requirements regarding payment to tutors, five Groups have left the auspices of Swindon U3A: the Choir, two Pilates groups, a Yoga group, and the Dance Orchestra. We wish them well for their future activities. The number of Groups operating has nevertheless increased by 18 to 168.

Role descriptions have now been completed for all the Management Committee members, sub-committee members, and Office volunteers. The same can be said for sub-committee remits following the successful restructuring. A new laser printer was purchased for the office, and a Paypal account opened to allow the option of paying subscriptions by credit card. The Health & Safety Officer organised, with the Red Cross, a First Aid Course for members in July. It is hoped to repeat this opportunity in the New Year. The New Members meeting will be held on 13 October at the Lawns Community Centre.

Finally, John Edgerton announced his intention to retire as Treasurer and we are now seeking a successor. The Committee expressed its warm appreciation of his work over six years.

John Williams

Chairman

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Monday 8th October 2018, at 2.15pm

Ellendune Community Centre, Wroughton, SN4 9LW

Agenda

1. Chairman's welcome
2. Apologies
3. Minutes of the AGM held on 9th October 2017
4. Matters Arising
5. Chairman's Report
6. Treasurer's Report and Approval of Accounts for 2017-18
7. Proposed changes to the Constitution of Swindon U3A in line with changes required by the Third Age Trust, and as previously notified to members during 2018.
8. Election of the Committee
9. Motions to the AGM
10. Any Other Business

Year Book Omissions

Advanced French

In spite of the fact that we did not appear in the 2018/19 Year Book we are still very much alive. We meet at the Lawn Centre, Guildford Avenue, fortnightly on Wednesday mornings from 10 o'clock to 12 noon starting on September 12 2018. We have some spaces. Click here to contact [Diana North](#)

Mah Jong

First and Third and Fifth Monday in the month all year. St Josephs Church, Wroughton, 2pm to 4.15pm
Have a social afternoon playing Mah Jong. No experience is needed. Come to learn and enjoy although there is a waiting list. Click here to contact [Molly Horner](#)

Quizzing 2

Fourth Monday of the month at Gorse Hill Community Centre at 2.00 pm.
Click here to contact [Jan Archer](#)

Canasta - West Swindon

I am launching a second Canasta group which will be known as Canasta - West Swindon
Venue will be Roughmoor Social Hall, Swinley Drive
Date and times will be the same as Canasta - East Swindon group, starting 13th September 2-4 pm and running fortnightly.
Everyone welcome in our friendly group. If you do not know this card game, or have played it a long time ago and need a refresher, we will teach you how to play. Click here to contact [Doreen Jackson](#)

Monthly Meetings

Ellendune Centre, Wroughton
on the 2nd Monday of the month at 2.15pm

8 October 2018

AGM

Followed by Dressability

How to meet the challenge of dressing disabled and elderly people.

Contributions of haberdashery and fabric welcomed at meeting.

12 November 2018

The Loss of the Titanic and a Wiltshire Family by Geoffrey Carr

The experiences of a Wiltshire family who sailed in the Titanic, together with a description of the ship and the causes of her loss.

10 December 2018

Christmas Entertainment

Musical entertainment from U3A groups, with a seasonal flavour, tea and mince pies.

14 January 2019

Up on Nob Hill Andy Binks

An illustrated history of the Old Town.

Saturday Night Dining Club

Would anyone be interested in joining a Saturday night Dining Club. I thought we could dine out on the first Saturday of the month and try out some of the pubs and restaurants around Swindon.

Places would be limited to 10 people on each outing. If you are interested contact [Margaret Bracher](#) by clicking on her name.

Busy time for Merribells

Merribells spent an enjoyable afternoon at Landford Budville Near Wellington in Somerset where we met up with handbell ringers from Somerset, Devon and Cornwall, this included another U3A Group from Cheddar.

The theme for the afternoon's ringing was "Flight" and the massed ringing music that we played included Those Magnificent Men in Their Flying Machines, The Blue Danube, and Sweet Nightingale. Massed ringing was interspersed with solo items from each of the groups attending and Merribells chose to play Around the World.



Prizes were awarded for the best decorated theme related table and for the most original outfit. Merribells' own Sheila Walker secured this prize with her realistic Witch Outfit which included a broomstick.

A busy few weeks also saw Merribells entertaining the residents of Kingsdown House, Park View Nursing Home and the members of Beechcroft Thursday Club.

Francis Hobbs

Sheila Walker

The History of Sevington School - by Dinah Starkey

Monthly Meeting on June 11th 2018

Described as a "Hidden Treasure", the Victorian School in the hamlet of Sevington near Grittleton, Wiltshire, is a history resource used by schools today. Pupils visit, dressed in costume, to taste life in school from 150 years ago.

The speaker came suitably dressed as a Victorian lady of standing, contrasting with the informal attire of her U3A audience! As attitudes to dress have changed, so too, has education.

Sevington School has been preserved from when it was closed in 1913. Then, the sole teacher, Miss Squire, retired after sixty years of teaching. She had had mixed ability classes of twenty pupils, from three to twelve year olds. As a strong character, she was respected and although there were two canes left behind, there was only one record of them being used. However, the threat of getting a rhubarb stick from the garden seemed to be enough! At the end, with only three pupils, the Neeld family closed the school, leaving the building intact.

The school had been built in 1848, by local landowner, Mr Joseph Neeld. After inheriting great wealth, he bought both the estate at Grittleton, and "bought" his own seat in Parliament. After a failed marriage, he was prevented from rising further up into the aristocracy. With the French Revolution, fearful landowners here paid more attention to their agricultural workers' conditions. Neeld turned to his own estates: improving the cottages, opening an alms-house and three schools. Using recycled church materials, Sevington School was built in the Gothic style, with a bell tower, a church porch and even a reredos on the back wall.

The Victorian curriculum was heavily based on Reading, Handwriting, Bible Study and Morality! Geography and History covered knowledge of the Empire and told tales of patriotism, honesty and respect for royalty.

On reaching standard four, pupils aged ten were able to leave. Girls went into service, for domestic work, using the cooking, cleaning and sewing skills learnt at the school. Young boys were then employed directly on the land for bird scaring, or stone collecting or even as a pig boy. None ever left the village, bar one, conscripted for W.W.1.

A popular Hymn, "All things Bright and Beautiful" written in 1848, had this verse;-

The rich man in his castle,
The poor man at his gate,
God made them high and lowly,
And ordered their estate.

This is mostly omitted, from hymn books today, considered an outmoded social view. But it was fit in those times for children learning their place in society.

The school is run as a charity, supported by local funding and by running Victorian days. It holds Open Days and welcomes arranged visits. With its motto "**Making History Come to life**", the Victorian school, Sevington does just that!

Irene Cooke

New Members' Meeting

There will be a New Members' Meeting on Saturday 13th October at Lawn Community Centre from 9.30 to 11.45 am (hot drinks served from 9.30am; meeting starts at 10). You will be able to meet and chat to other new members, will hear from your Chairman and other U3A Committee Members about making the most of your U3A membership and have the opportunity to ask any questions you may have about your U3A and its many groups. There will also be an IT drop in service where you can get one to one support for any new technology issues you may be experiencing.

The Management Committee hope you will join us and look forward to meeting you!

Adele Merrison

New Members' Representative
Swindon U3A Management Committee

Royal Wootton Bassett

In May, Royal Wootton Bassett held a Skittles Evening at The Woodshaw. This event was a great success, with many asking us to hold another one. 22 members took part. There were prizes for the general and killer rounds plus a raffle. The winners were Sandra Sheppard and Jean Davis. A meal was laid on by the pub.

Our other activities are:

Coffee Mornings alternate Wednesdays and Thursdays at the Cross Keys in RWB, starting at 11.15am

Knitting and Crocheting for charity groups on alternate Thursdays, the same week that a Coffee morning is on a Wednesday at 10am, also at the Cross Keys.

Monthly Sunday lunches.

Supporting the Community Cinema in RWB.

Taking part in the quiz held once a month at the local Sports Centre.

We are looking for new members, not only from Royal Wootton Bassett, but also from surrounding areas. Even if you come from Swindon you would be welcomed. If interested and you would like more information, please contact [John Turner](#) by clicking on his name.



Thursday Trekkers

Thursday 24th May

The group met at the Cotswold Water Park Gateway centre with 14 walkers in total so a good turnout again. Things did not look good as it was starting to rain but stopped after about a minute into the walk. Paul did a grand job on the selection of the walk and ensuring all the stiles could be negotiated as well as a helping hand down if needed. The walk was flat and fairly dry underfoot. Approximately 3.2 miles in length. On return to the cars 11 of the group went into the Cafe and enjoyed food, coffee and a chat. Picture left shows a round house next to the disused canal.

We have places for a few more walkers, in particular we are keen to welcome those U3A members who are not with other walking groups.

Thursday 7th June

We met outside the Woodland Edge Pub to do a 3.5 mile walk around Shaw Forest. The weather was overcast but kept dry if a little humid. Marie Spencer led her first walk and the group really appreciated the choice of route through the woodlands on a hard surface all the way round. We completed the walk in under 1 hour and 30 mins which was good going. We all went for a coffee and some food in the Woodland Edge Pub.

Andrew Jarvis



Motorbike Group Report 8th June 2018

Our first group ride-out saw 5 bikers turn up at the Blade Triumph shop in Swindon as our designated starting point to begin our 37 mile trip to the H Café near to Dorchester upon Thames.

We managed not to lose anyone but the lead rider (myself) had to stop a couple of times as the group became stuck at traffic lights. The weather was cloudy and cool when we set off and warmed up a little.

We all had a coffee at the H Café and walked around the few other bikes there including an old Norton Commando.

Our group's bikes consisted 2 Honda's, 2 Triumph's and 1 BMW. We now total 8 members in our club but room for others.

Andrew Jarvis – Group Leader.

A picture of the bikes, the riders were too shy!



Talent and Trouble at the Anvil

The U3A Concertgoers' Group heard a fine concert at Basingstoke's Anvil Theatre on June 5, part of the International Concert Series at this hall with super acoustics. We appreciated a mixed programme with a major contribution by the multi-talented Maxim Vengerov, who played the violin in the first half and conducted the Wurth Philharmonic Orchestra in the second. The Programme Notes called Maxim "universally hailed as one of the world's finest musicians".

We first enjoyed the Overture from Johann Strauss' Operetta Die Fledermaus (the Bat), followed by Vengerov soloing in the popular Violin Concerto No1 by Max Bruch, a tuneful and likeable work. Our Notes said that for five years this work topped the Classic FM Hall of Fame! Huge prolonged applause acclaimed a great performance, and back came the soloist and conductor... but not for an encore, no, straight on to the next work, Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso for Violin and Orchestra, with virtuosic part for the soloist.

After great tunes, now came trouble. Russian composer Dmitri Shostakovich needed on occasions to spell out the suffering of the Russian people, but was harassed by the authorities, and especially by Stalin, for not being more positive about his homeland. Many of us appreciated the pre-concert talk, in which John Jamieson introduced us to the 10th symphony. I personally only knew the 5th, one of the more accessible ones. The 10th? "It's about Stalin and the Stalin years" the composer wrote later. I was glad to hear it live, and would listen again, as difficult works do grow on subsequent hearings. There is no doubt this was an excellent reading directed by Vengerov.

Members I spoke to really enjoyed this concert, and we thanked Nina Stimson for organising the trip as brilliantly as ever. Nina wishes to hand over the reins, and her contribution to Swindon U3A needs acknowledging.

Robin Clegg

Theatre Goers visit to 42nd Street

One can almost forgive the USA anything when they provide us with their brand of entertainment. All hail to Hollywood and Broadway for the legacy of musical theatre and this was a stunner.

The musical "42nd Street" first saw the light of day in 1933 and now 85 years later (and coincidentally on the US national day), 60 or so U3A members watched a revival of the show in the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, which left them gasping.

Many years ago I sat in the same stall seats and watched Mary Martin, with help from Rogers and Hammerstein, try to "Wash that man right out of my hair". I thought then that musical theatre couldn't get better but how wrong can one be? 42nd Street fizzed and whizzed. It started with song and dance and finished with song and dance. Like all musicals the story is irrelevant but if it matters then it's about the new girl who makes good at the expense of the ageing star here played by our old friend Lulu, now in her 70th year. In the course of making good the new girl Clare Halse, manages to break Lulu's leg (7 times a week and a matinee!) and so a new star is born. But who cares? The cast sang their hearts out, danced until their feet ached and even the back stage staff toiled mightily. Where on earth did they store all that scenery? We lost count of the number of sets and ceased to boggle at their complexity and sheer audacity.

As for the dresses; what can a mere male say. I thought that I had seen it all before. There were hundreds. Each of the 16 scenes brought different dresses and the audience were left reeling by the thought of the chorus line rapidly pulling off one dress and then pulling on another ready to go back on stage to sing and dance some more.

If you haven't already seen it, empty the piggy bank and go. It's worth every penny. On behalf of those who went...thanks Cherry for picking another winner.

Phil Eagle

New Highworth Petanque group

Highworth Petanque Group has been running for many years under the auspices of Swindon U3A, playing on Thursday and Friday mornings. However, in recent years we have rarely had space for any new members. In an attempt to provide further places we have started a group on Wednesday afternoons, and our first session on September the 5th seemed to be very successful.

We have sixteen new members, fourteen of whom came along to the first session, but we could accommodate a few more. If you are interested in joining us on a Wednesday between 2 and 4, please contact the group organiser to check that we still have places available.

Click on the name to contact [Graham Arrondelle](#)

A New Writers Group

Swindon U3A already has a thriving Creative Writing Group, so is there scope for another? New member Joy Wodhams, who already runs a private evening Writing Group, would like to start a second group for U3A members only. This would be an afternoon group, meeting once monthly in Chiseldon, initially at her home. The venue is two minutes from J15 of the M4 and has plenty of parking.

Joy is the author of twelve published books and has taught many Creative Writing workshops over the years. Contact the [Joy Wodhams](#) by clicking on her name.



Behind Closed Doors

Who would have thought you would find a Japanese Garden in Swindon! Hands on Garden Group were invited to Bob Carvey's special garden. What an interesting afternoon watching the short presentation of some of his visits to Japan and their gardens followed by a tour of his lovely Japanese style garden, which showed so many elements you would expect to see, followed by a welcome cup of tea and cake.



Rosemary

a member of Hands on Garden group.

Swindon Home Library Service

The Swindon Home Library Service provides books for any people who enjoy reading but are unable for various reasons to visit the library in person. This service is provided by volunteers who choose the books and then deliver them on a regular basis. It is very rewarding to feel you are helping someone to continue the pleasure in reading.

Do you have any spare time? Would you consider becoming a volunteer with the library service? Training is given to new volunteers.

If you are interested then contact Gilli Rawlings at North Swindon library or by email at GRawlings@swindon.gov.uk

Travel Study Group C & G
Royal Albert Hall
Tuesday 9th October 2018

We are booked on The Grand Tour which includes a fascinating journey into the Hall's rich history, astonishing architecture and legendary performances. Highlights include the Queen's Box, the Royal Retiring Room, the main auditorium and the Gallery.

After the tour there will be free time to explore the local area.

Departure times and pick-up points:-

8.15am Matalan, Greenbridge

8.30am Ellendune Centre, Wroughton

8.45am Ashington Way, West Swindon

4.00pm Depart for Swindon

Cost £27 pp includes: coffee and a Danish pastry on arrival, guided tour, coach and driver's gratuity.

All members welcome

Contact [Mary Morgan](#) by clicking on her name.

U3A concert Trip
November 8th
Birmingham Symphony Hall

Matinee performance of Symphonic Dances, conductor Elim Chan. Featuring Sorcerer's Apprentice; Mozart's Piano Concerto No25 and Rachmaninov's Symphonic Dances.

Price £53.77

Contact [Nina Stimson](#) by clicking on her name.

**Aviation Group Visit to
The Helicopter Museum - Weston Super Mare
& Aerospace Bristol / Concorde
26th October 2018**

The Helicopter Museum at Weston is the world's largest museum dedicated to helicopters and other forms of rotary aircraft. British types dominate but the museum also houses an impressive array of helicopters from around the world.

Your visit to the recently opened Aerospace Bristol will take you on a journey from the beginnings of the British & Colonial Aeroplane Company, through to the modern day. Exhibits include aeroplanes, helicopters, missiles, satellites, engines and much more. The centrepiece of our visit will be the iconic Concorde Alpha Foxtrot the last of the supersonic passenger jets to be built and the last to fly.

In the morning we will make our way to Weston Super Mare and spend approximately 3 hours at the helicopter museum. We will then journey to Filton and spend the afternoon visiting Aerospace Bristol.

Catering facilities are available at both venues. However, due to ongoing building work, only light snacks are available at the helicopter museum. A cafe with full catering facilities is available at Aerospace Bristol.

Departure Times and Pick up Points

8.30am Ellendune Centre, Wroughton

8.40am Downes View/ Marlborough Road

8.45am Coate Water

4.30pm Depart for Swindon

Cost £30 per person which includes coach, entry to both museums and a guided tour of the helicopter museum and driver's gratuity.

All members and friends welcome

Contact [Ken Ivie](#) by clicking on his name.

Travel Group J Day Trip to Abergavenny
Thursday 18th October 2018

Departure Times and pick-up points :-

8.30am Ellendune Centre

8.45am Pipers Way

9.00am Coate

Time to explore, the town, the museum and the castle ruins.

1.30pm meet at St Mary's Priory Church for a tour of the church and the Tithe Barn (which houses the Abergavenny Tapestry)

4.00pm (approx.) Depart for home

Cost £24 includes cost of guided tours, coach fare and driver's gratuity

Contact [Bob Habgood](#) by clicking on his name.

Travel Study Group C & G Visit to Bristol
Monday 19th November 2018

A morning visit to Aerospace Museum, Bristol followed by free time in Bristol

Departure times and pick-up points: -

8.30am Outside Matalan, Greenbridge

8.50am Ellendune Centre, Wroughton

9.10am Ashington Way, West Swindon

4.30pm (approx.) Depart for Swindon

Approx Cost £22 pp includes: Museum entry, coach & driver's gratuity.

All members welcome Contact [Bill Mead](#) by clicking on his name.

Refunds are not made after 7 days prior to trip.

Dementia Friends

Helping to create dementia friendly communities

The Alzheimer's Society's Dementia Friends programme is its biggest ever initiative to change people's perceptions of dementia. It aims to transform the way the nation thinks, acts and talks about the condition creating dementia friendly communities. Stigma and lack of understanding cause many people with the condition to experience loneliness and social exclusion.

Dementia Friends is about learning more about dementia and the small ways you can help. From telling friends about the Dementia Friends programme to visiting someone you know living with dementia, every action counts.

A Dementia Friend is someone who has attended a one hour information session and has committed to an action that will make the lives of people living with dementia a little bit better. Anyone of any age can be a Dementia Friend and every action counts - from helping someone to find the right bus to spreading the word about dementia on social media. Currently there are roughly two and half million Dementia Friends nationwide.

Dementia Friends Champions are trained volunteers who encourage their family, friends, colleagues and local community to understand a little bit more about dementia, what it's like to live with dementia and then turn that understanding into action.

In Swindon there are a growing amount of activities for people living with dementia and their carers, and I link my work closely with Susan Lambert, Dementia Friendly Coordinator (susan.lambert@swindon.gov.uk). These activities available include:

Meet & Eat (St Andrew's Church, Walcot); Singing for the Brain (Walcot and Freshbrook); Memory Cafés twice a month (Olive Tree Café, Manor Garden Centre & Wyvern Theatre); Carers Cuppa (see Swindon Carers Centre for more information), Purton Lunch Club; Dementia Friendly Cinema at the Arts Centre, Dementia Friendly Swims at the Oasis & Dorcan Leisure Centres and Dementia Friendly Walks at the McArthur Glen Shopping Outlet. We are looking at setting up new activities all the time.

The Alzheimer's Society also provides support at Sanford House, Sanford Street, Swindon and the Society runs a National Dementia Helpline (0300 2221122) and an online Community Support "Talking Point" (forum.alzheimers.co.uk.)

My name is Anna Pike and I am a Dementia Friends Champion. I deliver Dementia Friends information sessions (go away with little nuggets of information about dementia). I would be more than happy to deliver a Dementia Friends information session to any U3A group or any group of people eg. Church, social, school, business etc. Each interactive session last 45 mins – 1 hour. Take the step – become a Dementia Friend.

Email me at annapike60@yahoo.co.uk to arrange a session or find out more.

Anna Pike

Swindon Film Society

Our 2018/19 programme continues in October with the following:

3 October Hotel Salvation (India)
17 October In Between (Palestine)

All films are shown at the Arts Centre, Devizes Road, Swindon and start at 19.45. Further details can be found on <http://www.swindonfilm.org.uk>



More Volunteers Needed In Wiltshire

To Listen To Children Read In Primary Schools

Can you spare an hour or two a week to listen to children read in a primary school? The reading charity Schoolreaders is looking for volunteers to carry out this important role.

Reading time for many children at home and at school is often insufficient and one in four children are now leaving primary school unable to read to the required standard. This can have a lifelong consequence. No qualifications are necessary, just a good command of spoken and written English.

Schoolreaders is flexible and matches your availability to the closest local school needing this help. Our volunteers find the scheme incredibly rewarding, knowing that a few hours helping a child learn to read each week can have such a great impact on their life chances.

Please visit the website www.schoolreaders.org to join or call 01234 924111 for further information.

Swindon College Training Restaurant

The training restaurant is open for bookings during term time and offers fantastic value for money. Superb, freshly prepared meals are served at lunch and dinner, using locally sourced ingredients wherever possible. All preparation and service is carried out by supervised students training for a career in the industry

Lunch

Tues, Wed, Fri seating 12 – 12.30pm
Thurs seating 1 - 1:30pm
3 courses £7.50

Dinner

Thursday seating 6.30 – 7pm
3 courses £14.00

Look out for our themed events!

Wine and dine



Christmas Meals

We are now taking bookings for our popular Christmas lunches and dinners. We can cater for groups up to 50 for details speak to Faith Marles.



Swindon
College

For further details or to make a booking:
01793 498244 | faithmarles@swindon.ac.uk.

0398

Copy Dates

Items for the November 'What's On' must be received by

15th October 2018

Items for the December Newsletter must be received by

7th November 2018

Items for the December 'What's On' must be received by

12th November 2018

All contributions must be sent to the Editor using the Newsletter contributions e-mail address shown opposite.

Geoff Bryan

List of Email Addresses

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Portable appliance testing (PAT)	pat@swindonu3a.org.uk

The Editor reserves the right to amend or abbreviate any entries submitted.
We should also like to point out that any views expressed are not necessarily those of the organisation or of the Editor.

Life President Norman Richards

Management Committee

Chairman	John Williams	644104
Vice-chairman	Avril Muirhead	525315
Treasurer	John Edgerton	642965
Secretary	Margaret Goldie	790546
Minutes Secretary	Victoria Fisher	320658
Assistant treasurer	Viv Dipper	322421
Office manager	Sylvia Alexander	614629
New members	Adele Merrison	480364
Accommodation	Viv Dipper	322421
Webmaster	Alex Cranswick	539529
Newsletter team	Bob Carvey	526746
Groups co-ordinator	Gill McKinnon	07990 507979
Health and Safety	Dave Maggs	344614
Publicity and media liaison	Martin Preston	694148

Key Tasks (Non committee)

Equipment and resources	Tony Bettley	525523
Office manager (Assistant)	Glenys Bettley	525523
Newsletter distribution	David and Jackie Hewitt	976525
Administration adviser	Tony Hill	534148
E-news distribution	Bob Carvey	526746
Speakers organiser	Cheryll Yeowell	812708
assisted by	Beth Bailey	849898

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