



# Newsletter



Steam Museum  
Photograph by  
Liz Strange

October 2019

## **NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**The AGM of Swindon U3A will be held  
at 2.15pm on Monday 14th October 2019  
at the Ellendune Community Centre, Wroughton, SN4 9LW**

### **A G E N D A**

Chair's welcome

Apologies

Minutes of the AGM held on 8th October 2018

Matters Arising

Chair's Report

Treasurer's Report and Approval of Accounts for 2018-19

Proposed adoption of Third Age Trust Model Constitution (as previously advised)

Election of the Committee

Motions to the AGM

Any Other Business

## **Chair Report September/October 2019**

### **Christmas entertainment.**

Thank you to the people who have contacted me about taking part in a small light-hearted skit/drama at our Christmas meeting in December. We now have enough people to entertain us at our Christmas Monday meeting. I will keep the names of those of us who will not be involved this time for another occasion.

### **Committee**

As many of you will have noticed, the committee have been making some changes to the way in which we communicate with the members of Swindon U3A. For the first time the processes by which the yearbook is updated and published have been conducted digitally with support offered for those who find this way of working a bit daunting. This has involved a considerable amount of work for all those involved in the process and they have to be congratulated for making the new process work so smoothly considering all that was involved. Similarly the process for groups to book a table for Open Day was also done through an automated process. While there were a few teething problems with the Yearbook and Open Day processes, on the whole it was very successful and the committee is grateful for your patience and co-operation while the new systems "bed in".

The revised constitution produced by the Third Age Trust which will be recommended by the committee for ratification by the membership at our AGM on the 14th October has once again highlighted the difficulty we have in finding members to join the management committee. It is made clear that all members of the management committee can only serve for a maximum of 3 years. During the MC Awayday in October we will be drawing up a succession plan to ensure that this requirement is put into place within the near future. To do this and ensure that Swindon U3A keeps going, we need more people to come forward and join the committee now so that there is a smooth transition when those with experience leave.

Please give joining the committee your urgent consideration now otherwise we may in a couple of years be back in the situation we were in when I offered to become a committee member. At that point all members were emailed with the message that if no-one stepped forward to take on the role of chair or vice chair, Swindon

U3A would have to close. We are one of the most successful U3As in the country with a thriving membership and it would be a huge loss if we cannot keep going because we do not have a committee. Please contact me at the chair email address or by clicking my name below if you would like to have a chat about joining the committee.

If you would prefer to “dip your toes in the water” by joining the events committee or the IT development committee to find out how the work of these groups feeds into that of the management committee, please contact me for further details at the above email address.

In a similar vein, no-one has yet come forward to take over the organisation of the distribution of the Newsletter, What’s On and Yearbooks. David and Jackie have very kindly agreed to continue in this role until the end of January. If no-one has offered to take over by that time, the committee will have to make alternative arrangements whereby members receive these publications. If you are able to help please either contact David and Jackie or myself.

As our new Swindon U3A year swings into action, I wish you all another action packed and fun filled time living together, talking together and working together.

Best wishes,

**[Avril Muirhead](#)**

## **Monthly Meetings**

Ellendune Centre, Wroughton

on the 2nd Monday of the month at 2.15pm

### **14th October 2019**

AGM

followed by

A Safe and Well Talk            Bob Tabel

Safe & Well Advisor, Swindon North Dorset & Wiltshire Fire Service

### **11th November 2019**

Medical Detection Dogs        David Bradley OBE

Introduction to how Medical Detection Dogs are used and their capabilities, including current trials and case studies.

### **9th December 2019**

Entertainment by 'End of The Track'

'End of The Track' was formed ten years ago, they perform songs from the 1960s era to raise funds for local charities. They have raised more than £20,000 for charities through concerts and CD sales. The singers are based around the town of Chippenham and are accompanied by electric and rhythm guitars as well as light percussion. They encourage audiences to join in the songs of artists such as Elvis, The Beatles, Everly Brothers, etc.

### **13th January 2020**

Across the Tropic of Capricorn            Pam and Eddy Lane

A voyage across the Pacific Ocean featuring the Wildlife of the Beautiful South Sea Islands from Norfolk Island to Papua New Guinea.

## Folk Singing

Singing is known to release endorphins, the feel-good brain chemical that makes you feel uplifted and happy. Not only that, singing simply takes your mind off the day's troubles to boost your mood.

Singing has some of the same health benefits as exercise, and community singing is effective for bonding groups of people, making it an ideal pastime to improve your broader social networks. This is particularly valuable in today's often alienating world, where many of our social interactions are conducted remotely via Facebook and Twitter.

Everyone can sing – however much we might protest – meaning it is one of the most accessible forms of music making. Song is a powerful therapy indeed. So whether you're into traditional folk music, the Beatles or songs from yesterday, finding the right choir could prove the perfect way to improve your health, well-being, and social life.

The excellent U3A Folk Singing Group, run by Rosemary and Dave Prior, is one such beneficial group. The Group meets at Gorse Hill Community Centre fortnightly on Tuesdays between 10am and 12 noon, singing the most varied of music, sometimes following a chosen theme or simply on an ad hoc basis.

If you would like to join this Group, please contact [Dave](#) or [Rosemary Prior](#) by clicking either of their names.

Article written by Drusilla Attwood and photo by Dave Prior



## **Proposed New Group**

I am proposing the establishment of a new group to explore the links between economic growth, inequality and climate change. I am hoping that this group will also come up with practical ideas in Swindon for addressing the problems that will be caused by global warming and rising personal and corporate debt that herald another recession similar to that which occurred in 2008.

Anyone who is interested in forming this group please contact me by clicking my name

[\*Michael Thomas\*](#)

## **New Beginners German Group**

I am hoping to run a Beginners German group suitable for those with little or no previous knowledge of the language. The class will run on Wednesdays from 10.00 to 12.00 (venue to be confirmed). We will use the coursebook Willkommen 1 (Paul Coggle and Heiner Schenke). If you are interested in joining or have any questions, please contact me by clicking on my name.

[\*Ken Kimber\*](#)

## **New Exercise To Music Group**

I am putting out feelers to identify any members that would be interested in a new Exercise to Music class. Ideally I would like to hold the class for an hour in the afternoon on a weekly basis. Any member who would like to join me on this exciting venture please do not hesitate to contact me by clicking on my name:

[\*Gillian Hayes\*](#)

## Life in a poem

submitted by Lesley Basu

### The Self-Playing Instrument Of Water

by Alice Oswald

It is the story of the falling rain  
To turn into a leaf and fall again  
It is the secret of a summer shower  
To steal the light and hide it in a flower

And every flower a tiny tributary  
That from the ground flows green and momentary

Is one of water's wishes and this tale  
Hangs in a seed head smaller than my thumbnail

If only I a passerby could pass  
As clear as water through a plume of grass

To find the sunlight hidden at the tip  
Turning to seed a kind of lifting raindrop

Then I might know like water how to balance  
The weight of hope against the light of patience

Water which is so raw so earthy-strong  
And lurks in cast iron tanks and leaks along

Drawn under gravity towards my tongue  
To cool and fill the pipe-work of this song

Which is the story of the falling rain  
That rises to the light and falls again



Alice Oswald was born in Reading and trained as a classicist in Oxford. Her work won the T. S. Eliot Prize in 2002 and the Griffin Poetry Prize in 2017. In September 2017, she was named as BBC Radio 4's second Poet-in-Residence . Next month she will take up the post of Oxford Professor of Poetry. "The Self-playing Instrument of Water" is a collaborative artwork with renowned designer: Harry Pearce .The poem draws on Kew West's historical relationship with our water supply, exploring its transformative properties and the deceptive simplicity of the water cycle. It is physically embedded into the landscape of the Kew Bridge

***Lesley Basu***

### **Merrifolk**

Merrifolk is a musical group in Swindon U3A which was started some twenty years ago We have a basic repertoire of folky tunes and we also play other tunes which take our fancy like film themes, Christmas music and old pop songs. Our members have their own instruments so we can practise at home from sheet music provided. We then meet every fortnight for the joy of playing together. Some of us like to play or sing solo numbers to add a bit of variety to our performances. We have about 1 hours music at performance standard at any one time and sometimes play for social clubs, luncheon clubs and self help groups, so we have an added incentive to perform well and gain experience of presenting music to an audience.



***Mike Ide***

# **The Sound of Music Sing-a-long!**

**Wednesday 30th October at 1.30pm – 5.00pm,  
Coleview Community Centre  
Towcester Rd, Swindon SN3 4AS**

Our second Sing-A-Long – and we're confident you'll know all these songs!

THIS IS A QUITE A LONG FILM – SO WE ARE STARTING AT 1.30PM

~ TEA AND CAKES WILL BE SERVED DURING THE INTERVAL ~

Please let us know if you are planning to attend, as there will be an overall limit on numbers.

You can register via our website (you don't need a SUCAS account):

Google "Swindon U3A" – When you get to the website, on the top Blue Bar click on 'Activities'; in the Yellow box click on 'Swindon Courses and Events'.

This takes you through to the list of events – Add your name and U3A number at the top of the list; Find Sing-a-long Sound of Music in the list of events and click in the 'PM' circle; and then click 'Register' at the bottom of the page. All done!

or Phone Margaret Goldie 01793 790546

or or click on [Martin Preston](#)

## **Drones**

Following requests from members, an Information Morning about drones has been arranged which will take place on Saturday 16th November from 10.30-12.30 at the Coleview Community Centre. Refreshments will be served from 10.00. Speakers will be Philip from the Halo Drone Company based in Bradford upon Avon and Isla from Oxford University Drone Society. We look forward to seeing you at this interesting and informative event. Book a place on the SUCAS website or contact me directly by clicking on my name

[Avril Muirhead](#)

## **The Arts Society Kennet & Swindon**

Monday October 21st

The Arts Society Kennet & Swindon  
the Ellendune Centre, Wroughton.

Coffee from 10am followed by the talk 'From Soup to Syllabub' an insight into the eating habits of 18th century England by Jane Tapley at 11am.

Members of TASKS are free but guests are very welcome at a cost of £7 each talk.

For further information please see

[www.theartssocietykennet.org.uk](http://www.theartssocietykennet.org.uk)

## **Swindon Seniors Forum**

### **AGM and Open Meeting**

Date: 22 October 2019

Registration: 1:30pm for AGM start at 2:00pm

Venue: Pinetrees Community Centre, The Circle, Pinehurst

The meeting is open to anyone aged 55 or over. There will be a speaker, information stands and refreshments.

## Listen & Enjoy!

It is with great sadness that we have to report that one of our longest running groups, the Classical Music group, rechristened a few years ago "Listen & Enjoy!" has had to fold due to lack of members. It seems that our new, younger U3A members appear not to enjoy the wonderful tunes and rhythms that classical music has to offer. Our present members are getting older and less mobile and no newer members are coming forward to take their place. As a consequence the membership has dropped to two or three. I can certainly remember only a few years ago when we were up to ten or a dozen.

It seems odd that in this day when classical music is getting more popular with the rest of the population, for example the growth of new radio stations like Classic FM and Scala, the older generation seems not to want any of this. I wonder why?

If anyone else wishes to start a new classical music group, perhaps concentrating more on Film, TV and games music we wish them all well. The coast is now clear!

With many thanks to those who have supported us in the past.

***Norman Lambert***

***Gillian Bromhead***

### 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  
**2 courses ONLY £6.00**  
**3 courses ONLY £8.00**

**Dinner**  
Thursday seating 6.30 – 7pm  
**3 courses ONLY £14.00**

**Look out for our themed events!**

Please rate us on  **tripadvisor**



### The Restaurant

### 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](mailto:faithmarles@swindon.ac.uk)

0709

**Travel Group J**  
**Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> October**  
**Visit to Surrey**

This trip will call at Guildford Cathedral for coffee and then travel on to Denbies Wine Estate near Dorking for lunch. The afternoon will be spent at nearby Polesden Lacey, the early 1900's home of Socialite Margaret Greville who entertained both Royalty and Statesmen of her day.

Departure times and pick-up points:-

8.30am Ellendune Centre

8.40am Pipers Way

8.50am Coate Water

4.00pm Depart for Swindon

Approximate cost £27.50 dependent on numbers travelling, but to include coach travel, driver's gratuity and admission to Polesden Lacey. A rebate will be made to National Trust Members.

All U3A members welcome to join us.

Contact Barbara and Peter Davidson. Tel. 01793 520595

**Quote, unquote**

Charm is the ultimate weapon, the supreme seduction, against which there are few defenses. If you've got it, you need neither money, looks, nor pedigree. It's a gift, given only to give away, and the more used, the more there is.

Laurie Lee -novelist

**Lesley Basu**

## **Newsletter distribution**

We are looking for volunteers to take over the newsletter distribution role within Swindon U3A.

We need volunteers for two roles:

- organising the distribution of the newsletters/yearbooks 6 times a year. This involves collecting the magazines from the printers, and arranging their collation and distribution to other volunteers who deliver them to our members.

- allocating members who require a printed newsletter to a distributor in their area and printing the lists and labels that support the distribution process. This mainly involves the use of a computer either at home or at the office.

Out of pocket expenses will be reimbursed.

If you think you can help or would like further information please contact me by clicking on my name.

**[David Hewitt](#)**

### **Copy Dates**

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

**17th October 2019**

Items for the December Newsletter must be received by

**9th November 2019**

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

**17th November 2019**

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

***Geoff Bryan***

## List of Email Addresses

Chair	chairman@swindonu3a.org.uk
All members of committee	committee@swindonu3a.org.uk
Accommodation	accommodation@swindonu3a.org.uk
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Treasury Team for Accommodation Banking Visits	treasuryteam@swindonu3a.org.uk
Webmaster	webmaster@swindonu3a.org.uk

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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

Chair	<a href="#">Avril Muirhead</a>
Vice-chair	vacant
Treasurer	<a href="#">Viv Dipper</a>
Secretary	<a href="#">Margaret Goldie</a>
Minutes Secretary	<a href="#">Patricia Scaplehorn</a>
Office manager	<a href="#">Sylvia Alexander</a>
New members	<a href="#">Sandie Mulcahy</a>
Accommodation	<a href="#">Chris Ockwell</a>
Webmaster	<a href="#">Alex Cranswick</a>
Newsletter team leader	vacancy
Groups co-ordinator	<a href="#">Gill McKinnon</a>
Health and Safety	<a href="#">Dave Maggs</a>
Publicity and media liaison	<a href="#">Martin Preston</a>

## Key Tasks (Non committee)

Equipment and resources	vacancy
Office manager (Assistant)	<a href="#">Glenys Bettley</a>
Newsletter distribution	<a href="#">David and Jackie Hewitt</a>
Administration adviser	<a href="#">Tony Hill</a>
E-news distribution	vacancy
Speakers organiser	<a href="#">Cheryll Yeowell</a>
assisted by	<a href="#">Beth Bailey</a>

## Office

Swindon U3A Office, Gorse Hill Community Centre, Chapel Street,  
Swindon, SN2 8DA

(entry is by middle door on right hand side of building)

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