



# Newsletter



David Murray John building  
Photograph by  
Virginia Griffin

April 2019

## **Chair's report for January & February 2019**

A treasurer's team has been set up by the committee. Viv Dipper is our new treasurer and other members of the team will be taking responsibility for various aspects of the role. Once the team has "bedded in" there will be a longer article about the treasurer team in the newsletter. The existing link on the website to the treasurer should continue to be used should you wish to contact the treasurer about any financial matters.

The committee said goodbye to our minute secretary Victoria Fisher who has been a huge support to the management committee over several years. She has been replaced by Patricia Scaplehorn who has very kindly agreed to take over from Victoria.

The committee were pleased to meet our newest group organisers at a briefing meeting which the committee held in Gorse Hill on 24th January. Three training sessions for new group organisers run by Alex Cranswick our webmaster have been well attended.

The Events Committee was delighted to welcome three new members who will be helping us to plan more events for the coming year. If you have any suggestions for events which Swindon U3A could put on for our members please contact me through the chair link on the website.

The IT Development Committee is delighted that an IT support team is now working with our webmaster Alex Cranswick to ensure the SUCAS website continues to be maintained.

One of our members has now joined the yearbook production team working alongside Bob Carvey. A new system for collecting all yearbook information has been introduced this year which will use the existing information on the website as the basis for the content of the yearbook. More information about this will be available in future newsletters.

At our Awayday in March the committee will, among other issues, be looking at our current constitution to see what changes we will need to make to ensure our constitution complies with the guidance contained in the new model constitution published by the Third Age Trust.

***Avril Muirhead***

Chair

## **Merry Christmas!**

Do you enjoy dressing up and a bit of drama? Are you a member of an operatic or drama society? Then this is your chance to shine! The events committee are hoping to put on a short light-hearted dramatic presentation for the Christmas Monthly meeting in December 2019 and we need as many enthusiastic players as possible. If you would like to be part of this entertainment, please get in contact with me either through the chair email on the website or by clicking on my name [Avril Muirhead](#)

## **New Barn Dance Group**

New Barn Dance Group at Liden Community Centre, Swindon from 2.00 to 4.00pm on Tuesday 16th April.

This Tuesday group has been running once a month since October because our Monday group was over subscribed. We are happy to take on additional members. No experience needed as all dances are talked through before being danced. You do not need a partner. If it is your first time, please arrive a little before 2:00 pm so that we can get the registration done before we start dancing. This is a great way to socialise and take part in some gentle exercise. Simply turn up on the day or contact me, Rosie Jarvis.

Contact [Rosie Jarvis](#) by clicking on her name.

## **Swindon Seniors Forum Spring Open Meeting**

Venue: Central Community Centre, Emlyn Square, Swindon

Date: 9th May 2019

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

There will be Speakers, Information Stalls and Refreshments.

For more information phone 01793 766338

## **Monthly Meetings**

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

### **8th April 2019**

My Journey to the Weakest Link      Linda Dowsett

The personal experience of a contestant of appearing on "The Weakest Link", how a TV programme is made and how "mean" is Ann Robinson in reality.

### **13th May 2019**

The British Honours System      Ashley Jones

Presentation about the interesting facets of the British Honours system, including some of the lesser-known awards and some well-known recipients. Advice on how to successfully nominate worthy individuals and how to initiate the process with a strong chance of success.

### **10th June 2019**

Why Diets Fail and What we can do about it      John Rope

An interesting and fun presentation about the problems associated with diets, the frauds, the science and some of the "big lies", together with tips for success.

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

Monday 15th April talk at The Ellendune Centre, Wroughton.

A History of Exotic Colours and Poisonous Pigments by Lynne Gibson

This lecture tells the stories of alchemy and adventure behind some of our most beautiful and colourful paintings.

Coffee from 10am, talks start at 11am.

All welcome, but you must be a member or guest (cost £7) of a member to attend. For further information please see:  
[www.theartssocietykennet.org.uk](http://www.theartssocietykennet.org.uk)

## **A Date With Spring**

by John Agard

Got a date with spring  
Got to look me best.  
Of all the trees  
I'll be the smartest dressed.

Perfumed breeze  
behind me ear.  
Pollen accessories  
all in place,

Raindrop moisturizer  
for me face.  
Sunlight tints  
to spruce up the hair.

What's the good of being a tree  
if you can't flaunt your beauty?

Winter, I was naked  
Exposed as can be.  
Me wardrobe took off  
with the wind.

Life was a frosty slumber.  
Now, spring, here I come.  
Can't wait to slip in  
to me little green number.



Poet and playwright John Agard was born in Guyana in 1949. He won the Queens medal for poetry in 2012. He is married to another wonderful writer - Grace Nichols.

Submitted by:

***Lesley Basu***

## **The Motor Trade 1950 – 1980 by Alan Nix**

At the monthly meeting in March we were treated to a wonderful trip down memory lane. Alan Nix and his family have been in the motor trade in Swindon since moving here from Ilford in 1950 and his talk was amply illustrated from his collection of photographs. We saw not only cars from the 1950's to 1980's but also photographs of Swindon during this era. Naturally, being Swindon, he talked of the railways and showed pictures of the railway stations at Highworth, Royal Wootton Bassett and in Old Town.

However, the stars of the show were the cars. After the war, 60% of the car production in this country had to go for export and together with the controls on hire purchase this made it very difficult to own a car at this time and many of the cars on the road were made pre-war. As production geared up, these older and often foreign cars, were replaced with the models we remember as being British. He talked of the British made cars such as Austin, Morris, Rover, Hillman, Ford and Rolls Royce. How soon we forget what a wealth of engineering expertise there was in this country.

Many of these cars could be bought for a few hundred pounds back then but these cars in good condition today can change hands for many tens of thousand pounds. Whilst we look back at these cars with nostalgia, we also need to remember that many had no heater, the lights were next to useless and the windscreen wiper stopped working when going uphill. On the other hand, petrol was only 2 shillings and 3 pence a gallon (the equivalent of 2.4p per litre in today's money). In those days there were 40,000 small petrol stations which were nearly all privately owned and often had a workshop attached.

Alan reminisced about Swindon's Magic Roundabout, Coate Water and Regent's Circus but above all about the garages that used to be in Swindon as opposed to the large edge of town showrooms we see today. One of the few remaining is Haskins in Wroughton and it is rumoured that even this could be sold for housing development. The Nix family had a "Radio Cars" business in Crombey Street but the cars never actually had radios in them and the business relied on public telephone boxes for their trade. The business thrived on the back of all the American service personnel in the area and by providing cars for weddings. As the Yanks gradually went home the business declined and the family moved to selling cars from premises in Osbourne Street where they stayed until 1995.

Alan finished his talk by praising car mechanics and saying that they don't get the credit they deserve. Unlike many trades, the car mechanic has to be proficient at many skills including metal working, engineering, electrics and plumbing. These days that list includes IT skills.

***Bob Carvey***



### **New Quiz Group**

A new quiz group is starting on Friday 5th April, in the afternoon, between 2-4pm, at Hook Village Hall, just outside of Royal Wootton Bassett, on the road to Purton. There is ample parking.

Spaces are available. Interested in quizzing? Come along and enjoy an afternoon of fun, socializing and we might learn something along the way.

There will be a charge of £1 to cover admin and other costs.

We aim to run the quiz on the first Friday of every month.

Please let me know if you require more information or wish to join this new group.

Contact **John Turner** by clicking on his name.

## **Spanish Dance Group**

### **Sevillanas**

The Sevillanas is a beautiful and popular Spanish folk dance from Seville. It's typically danced at events throughout the region of Andalusia, especially the 'Feria de Abril' in Seville.

It's thought the Sevillanas has its roots in a 15th century dance and evolved to its distinctive form around the 18th century. Originally danced by courting couples, under the watchful eye of their parent or guardian to ensure there was no impropriety, these days it's danced by people of all ages and genders, usually in pairs, but often in groups. Although it has a structured choreography, dancers often create their own variations of the steps. Castanets are a traditional addition, although to add style, other accessories can be used such as fans, hats, chairs and even horses!

The Guinness Book of World Records for the largest number of people dancing the Sevillanas was achieved by 1,556 participants in Córdoba, Spain, on 21st May 2012.

### **Easter Taster - Sevillanas Dance Workshop**

Tuesday 16th and Tuesday 30th April, 10:30 - 11:30 at Gorse Hill Community Centre.

A seated version of the dance is also included, so this workshop would be suitable for all levels of mobility.

Contact me for more details by clicking on my name [Lin Craig](#)

## **Art Exhibition**

**Tuesday 30th April, 11:30 - 12:30**

**at Gorse Hill Community Centre in the main hall**

An informal exhibition of artwork with a Spanish theme, created by artists from the various U3A art groups. All welcome.

(In collaboration with the Spanish dance group)



## **Patchwork Group Royal Wootton Bassett**

I would like to start a patchwork group in Royal Wootton Bassett.

My thoughts are to have a group which meets twice a month on Tuesday morning from 10 to 12, initially at my house but if there is a strong demand (more than 6) we can find a hall, hopefully.

I'm thinking of a group for beginners making cushions, bags and boxes to start and then if that goes well we can move on to making whole quilts and learning how to hand and machine quilt.

If you're interested please contact [Mary Loran](#) by clicking on my name.

## **Travel Study Group C & G**

### **Visit to Oxford**

**Tuesday 9th April 2019**

We will be dropped off and picked up in the centre of Oxford. Guided tours of the Bodleian Library and the Sheldonian Theatre are included. Following the tour of the Sheldonian Theatre and nearby area, there will be an opportunity, for those who wish, to explore the roof space. There is no extra cost for this add-on.

Within easy walking distance you will find lots of places of interest where entry is also free. These include: the Ashmolean, Oxford Museum of Natural History, Pitt Rivers and History of Science museums.

Departure times and pick-up points:-

8.30am Ashington Way, West Swindon

8.45am Ellendune Centre, Wroughton

9.00am Matalan, Greenbridge.

4.00pm Depart for Swindon

Cost £27pp includes: coach, the guided tours and driver's gratuity.

All members welcome

Contact [Sylvia Blacklock](#) by clicking on her name.

## **Concert Goers Group**

invite you to The Birmingham Symphony Hall  
Sunday, June 16th at 3pm

Mahler, Symphony no 2 (The Resurrection)  
with  
Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and Chorus  
Conducted by Mirga Grazinyte-Tyla

We hope to get to Birmingham by 1pm giving time for lunch and perhaps a stroll by the canal

Pick up points (times to be confirmed)  
Downsview Rd/Marlborough Road Junction  
Bus Station  
Ashington Way (W Swindon) bus stop

Contact **Nina Stimson** by clicking on her name  
Or **Cindy Matthews** by clicking on her name

By 6th April

Cost £51 maximum, based on 30 people attending, includes ticket, coach and driver's gratuity.

**Aviation Group Visit**  
**Battle of Britain Bunker, RAF Uxbridge**  
**& The De Havilland Museum**  
**Friday 12th April 2019**

The Battle of Britain Bunker is an underground operations room at RAF Uxbridge formerly used by No11 Group Fighter command during WW2. Fighter aircraft were controlled from this Ops Room throughout the War but notably during the BoB and D Day.

The De Havilland Aircraft Museum at London Colney is the oldest museum in the world dedicated to the preservation of De Havilland aircraft. The museum is a working museum so you are likely to see volunteers at work willing to answer questions.

Following our visit to the De Havilland museum in the morning we will make the short journey to Uxbridge to visit the BoB Bunker in the afternoon.

Departure Times and Pick up points

8.00am Highworth. Brewery St Car Park

8.20am Ellendune Centre Wroughton

8.25am Downes View / Marlborough Rd

8.30am Coate Water.

4.00pm Depart for Swindon

Cost £32 includes coach, entrance to museums and drivers gratuity. All members welcome

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

**U3A Thames Valley Network - Events Day**

**Tuesday 28th May 2019**

History On Film - (Harlots or Heroines? Women in the 18th Century on Film and TV)

Yolande Paterson Theatre, St Helen's & St Katherine's school, Faringdon Road, Abingdon, OX14 1BE

For more details go to: [www.u3atvnetwork.org.uk/](http://www.u3atvnetwork.org.uk/)

**Travel Group J & Aviation Group**  
**Visit To The Historic Houses & Heritage of Yorkshire**  
**8th - 12th September 2019**

Based at the 3\* Mercure Leeds Parkway Hotel on the outskirts of Leeds.

Day 1 We board our coach, leave Swindon and, en route to our hotel, we visit the Crich Tramway Village overlooking the famous Derwent Valley in the Peak District. Crich Tramway Village is a restored period village and is also the home of the National Tram Museum.

Day 2 In the morning our Blue Badge Guide accompanies us when we visit the Yorkshire Air Museum & Allied Air Forces Memorial on the former site of RAF Elvington a WW2 Bomber Command airfield and our guide remains with us when we visit Castle Howard in the afternoon. This magnificent 18th century house is home to the Howard family, has been richly furnished and is set in 1000 acres of parkland with rose gardens, lakes and fountains.

Day 3 With our Blue Badge Guide we visit the city of York. on our guided tour we take in sights such as the City Walls, the Shambles and the Minster, the largest Gothic cathedral in northern Europe. We then visit the Merchant Adventurer's Hall for a guided tour. Built between 1357 - 1361 it is one of the best preserved medieval guild halls in the world. The rest of the day is at leisure in the city.

Day 4 With our Blue Badge Guide we enjoy an included one way nostalgic steam train journey from Grosmont to Pickering through the picturesque North Yorkshire Moors. In the afternoon we visit Eden Camp the former prisoner of war camp which depicts the history of WW2.

Day 5 After checking out of our hotel before returning home we visit Harewood House. The home of the Earl of Harewood, the Queen's cousin, the house is renowned for it's stunning architecture, exquisite Adam interiors, Chippendale furniture and fine art collection. It is set in a 1000 acre Capability Brown landscape.

Cost £449.00 (Single room supplement £99.00)

This includes all coach travel and hotel (Bed, breakfast and evening meal).

Extras: Entrance fees to places visited

Insurance if required £24

Departure times and pick up points, Ellendune Centre & Swindon Bus Station. (times to be announced at later date) All members and friends welcome.

For further details and brochure contact [Ken Ivie](#) by clicking on his name.

**Travel Group B & D**  
**Trip to Pershore & Broadway**  
**Tuesday 9th April**

Pick up points

Highworth                    8.00am

Ashington Way            8.15am

Bus Station                8.30am

Chapel Street             8.45am

10.15 1st Guided tour of Pershore

11.30 2nd Guided tour of Pershore

Leave Pershore 1.30 for "Blossom Trail" to Broadway

Leave Broadway 5pm

Cost £17.50

Please contact

**Sue Williams** or

**Margaret Thomas** by clicking on one of the names

## The College Training Restaurant

### Spring Menu

23rd April—24th May

£7.50 for a three course lunch including a soft drink  
on arrival and followed by tea or coffee

### A very special offer

Between the 5th June and the 21st June

£6.50pp for a three course lunch including tea/coffee

### Dinners on a Thursday

From 23rd April to 21st June all three course dinners  
including tea/coffee for £12.50pp (excluding our themed events)

To make a reservation email: [faithmarles@swindon.ac.uk](mailto:faithmarles@swindon.ac.uk)  
Or Tel: 01793 498244



## The Restaurant

### Copy Dates

Items for the May 'What's On' must be received by  
**18th April 2019**

Items for the June Newsletter must be received by  
**11th May 2019**

Items for the June 'What's On' must be received by  
**16th May 2019**

All contributions must be sent to the Editor using the Newsletter contributions email address shown below.

**Geoff Bryan**

## List of Email Addresses

### General

General enquiries	enquiries@swindonu3a.org.uk
Office manager	office.manager@swindonu3a.org.uk
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Webmaster	webmaster@swindonu3a.org.uk

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All members of committee	committee@swindonu3a.org.uk
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Monthly meeting speaker organiser	speaker.organiser@swindonu3a.org.uk
Portable appliance testing (PAT)	pat@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**

Chairman	Avril Muirhead	01793 525315
Vice-chairman	Vacant	
Treasurer	Viv Dipper	01793 322421
Secretary	Margaret Goldie	01793 790546
Minutes Secretary	Patricia Scaplehorn	01793 823062
Office manager	Sylvia Alexander	01793 614629
New members	Vacant	
Accommodation	Viv Dipper	01793 322421
Webmaster	Alex Cranswick	01793 539529
Newsletter team	Bob Carvey	01793 526746
Groups co-ordinator	Gill McKinnon	07990 507979
Health and Safety	Dave Maggs	01793 344614
Publicity and media liaison	Martin Preston	01793 694148

### **Key Tasks (Non committee)**

Equipment and resources	Tony Bettley	01793 525523
Office manager (Assistant)	Glenys Bettley	01793 525523
Newsletter distribution	David and Jackie Hewitt	01793 976525
Administration adviser	Tony Hill	01793 534148
E-news distribution	Bob Carvey	01793 526746
Speakers organiser	Cheryll Yeowell	01793 812708
assisted by	Beth Bailey	01793 849898

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