



Newsletter



Town Hall - Royal Wootton Bassett
Photograph by
John Turner

April 2020

Chair's Report February 2020

On behalf of the Management Committee I would like to begin by wishing you all a very belated Happy New Year.

At the start of a new year, please could you make sure that if you have changed any of your contact details, you either update them on SUCAS if you are a member, or notify the office so that they can update your details on our database. Thank you!

At the December and January meetings the committee discussed the issue of the production and purpose of the Yearbook. Currently approximately 1200 copies are printed with an approximate cost of £2 per member. Some members receive a copy by post, which increases the overall cost. As I have previously intimated, Sue Carvey has stepped down from the role of collating and producing this publication. In the absence of any member offering to take over this task the committee have begun to consider alternatives to producing the Yearbook in its current form.

The function of the Yearbook was discussed. It was noted that a disadvantage of the present method of production is that the Year Book is virtually out of date by the time it is printed (July/August) as new groups generally start between September and Christmas. Swindon U3A public website therefore provides more up to date information regarding what groups exist and who to contact for information about their activities than the Yearbook.

The committee therefore agreed that this year an electronic version of the Yearbook, which is updated as soon as new group information is added to the website, will be produced.

The committee also acknowledges however, that some members prefer to have a hard copy of the Year Book, and that there are a number of members who do not have internet access and therefore require information about Swindon U3A in hard copy. The committee is therefore proposing that individual sheets for different categories of groups will be printed to be given out at the Open Day. These sheets will be amended and updated later in the year once the new groups have been established to include information about groups by category and what they offer. These sheets will be given out at the New Member Meetings in October and March.

While these proposals do not do away with the need for group organisers to update the information about their group(s) on SUCAS in the summer as they did last year regarding details of activities, start dates, venues & waiting lists, they would clearly save on cost and enable us to provide more up to date information to members and would-be members.

The committee would like your feedback and comments on these proposals so please contact me either using the chair email address on SUCAS or using my personal email address avmuirhead@gmail.com. I look forward to hearing from you.

I wish you all continued learning, fun and fellowship,

Avril Muirhead

Coronavirus

As we go to press the situation is changing very fast and it is uncertain that any of the advertised trips/events will go ahead. Members should check on our website for further details.

There is no "What's On" this month, due to government advice, which suggests we shouldn't be having any events or outings.

The Gorse Hill Office is now closed until further notice.

Monthly Meetings

Ellendune Centre, Wroughton

on the 2nd Monday of the month at 2.15pm

6th April 2020 (a week earlier because of Easter)

To Educate, Inform and Entertain Tim Blackmore

A run through the history of UK radio including the use of propaganda in WW2 and some entertaining clips from radio shows.

11th May 2020

The Early History of Penguin Books Barry Edwards

A consideration of the first 25 years of Penguin Books and the huge impact of the 'paperback revolution' on reading habits. The talk is illustrated with early examples from my very large collection of Penguins.

8th June 2020

How to cope with a damaged brain Nick Gibbs

Interesting and amusing talk on how to manage a brain injury day to day, life after having a stroke and coping with dementia and mental health.

New Walking Group

The next walk will be on the 2nd April followed by the 30th April then 28th May but may increase in frequency if the group membership increases at a reasonable rate. The walks will be around 3 to 3.5 miles on level ground on a combination of hard foot paths and grass which hopefully will be dry by then! Once we have people interested then we can organise a general meeting.

To contact click on [Andrew Jarvis](#)

U3A Activities In Royal Wootton Bassett

A short history

Following the ethos of the U3A, if you have an interest and there is a gap what can you do to fill it?

Swindon U3A Activities in Royal Wootton Bassett began in December 2017. The initiative was started by Kathrina and myself. Kathrina managed to find a venue – The Cross Keys, where we could use their function room for free. Aiming to hold weekly Coffee Mornings, seven turned up to the first meeting. In 2 years, membership has grown steadily and to date we have over sixty members. We welcome anyone from Swindon/surrounding areas, not just from RWB.

Suggestions were invited as to what else people wanted and a successful Knitting and Crochet Group was formed. The group knits items for charity, also taking part in The Wiltshire In Bloom competition and the last two years in The Christmas Tree Festival in RWB.

We also organise very popular Sunday lunches at the end of each month, visiting various venues around the area. We support the Community Cinema in RWB. A small group take part in the Cross Keys quiz on a Thursday evening, winning a handful of times.

Other activities that we organise and are going well are Skittles Evenings, Quiz and Scrabble groups. Sue and Kathrina are also involved in organising the Day Trips.

Gradually people have been encouraged to start other activities. Adding to Diana's chair refurbishing group, now there is a patchwork group, a weekday small group luncheon group, and shortly a table tennis group. Suggestions for other activities as well as group helpers are welcome and support is always available.

This is just the beginning of activities in Royal Wootton Bassett. Kathrina and John realised that there was a shortage of things to do in RWB for U3A Members, now we feel we are filling that gap or was it we didn't jump back fast enough? Well watch this space!

John Turner

Barn Dancing 2

At a review meeting held in December, full support was given to continue with the sessions as planned.

There is plenty of room for more members, no partners required. The Group meets at Liden Community Centre on Tuesdays 2-4pm on these dates:

April 7th & 21st; May 19th; June 2nd.

You will find it a very enjoyable and uplifting way to spend an afternoon. Why not give it a try? Please let me know in advance when you are coming.

To contact click on [Frank Rutzler](#)

Proposed New Group

I am looking at starting a new social group, mainly for men, but open to all, later this year, located in the Royal Wootton Bassett area. This will be a general discussion group with the agenda set by members. The group will meet in the Cross Keys in RWB on the second Tuesday of each month from 10.30am till midday and there would be an opportunity to stay on for lunch. I would like to have at least 10 members to start off with. If interested, please contact me.

To contact click on [John Turner](#)

Travel Study Group C

Travel Study Group C currently has vacancies

Meets fortnightly on Tuesday from 10.00am until 12.00 noon at Toothill Church, Dunwich Drive, Swindon SN5 8SX

If you are interested please contact by clicking on:

[Sylvia Blacklock](#)

Life in a Poem

Submitted by Lesley Basu

Everyone Sang

Everyone suddenly burst out singing;
And I was filled with such delight
As prisoned birds must find in freedom,
Winging wildly across the white
Orchards and dark-green fields; on - on - and out of sight.

Everyone's voice was suddenly lifted;
And beauty came like the setting sun;
My heart was shaken with tears; and horror
Drifted away ... O, but Everyone
Was a bird; and the song was wordless; the singing will never be
done.

Siegfried Sassoon (1886-1967)

With VE day fast approaching I thought of this well loved poem by war poet: Siegfried Sassoon. He gives us a very interesting insight into how he came to write it:

"One evening in the middle of April I had an experience which seems worth describing for those who are interested in methods of poetic production. It was a sultry spring night. I was feeling dull-minded and depressed, for no assignable reason. After sitting lethargically in the ground-floor room [at Weirleigh, his mother's home] for about three hours after dinner, I came to the conclusion that there was nothing for it but to take my useless brain to bed. On my way from the arm-chair to the door I stood by the writing-table. A few words floated into my head as though from nowhere. In those days I was always on the look-out for a lyric - I wish I could say the same for my present self - so I picked up a pencil and wrote the words on a sheet of note-paper. Without sitting down, I added a second line. It was as if I were remembering rather than thinking. In this mindless manner I wrote down my poem in a few minutes. When it was finished I read it through, with no sense of elation, merely wondering how I had come to be writing a poem when feeling so stupid."

The Arts Society Kennet & Swindon

The Arts Society Kennet & Swindon meeting at The Ellendune Centre Wroughton 10am - 12pm. All welcome but you must be a member of TASKS or as a guest (£7) to attend. Talks:

April 20th 'The Field of Cloth of Gold' 6,000 Englishmen in France.

May 18th 'Wentworth Woodhouse', The story of a great house in Yorkshire.

June 15th 'Opera and Design'

September 21st 'Gold of the Gods' Treasures of South America.

Full Membership is £42 from April-April, for more information visit: www.theartsocietykennet.org.uk

Calling all groups

Many of us have a mobile phone, but how many of us use it to the most advantage?

"I don't!" may be your reply but think of the great use your mobile phone could be!

Travel groups could have a reminder of their great day out. Knitters could make a video of how to make certain stitches, save it to their site via youtube so novice knitters can watch and learn. Archers could record their events. Photographers could record sounds to add to their photos. Language courses could record dialogue and lectures. There is no end to the possibilities.

There are many free video editing programs out there, which I can recommend. If you are interested in finding out more, then get in touch.

To contact click on [Pete Dore](#)

U3A Video Group

The Day Trips Group
Houses of Parliament
Monday 20th April 2020

At the Houses of Parliament you can visit Westminster Hall. You will take a tour of the building which is only open to the public with a guide. This will include all the main rooms including the main chambers and will last approximately 1hr 30mins. It is a truly wonderful building with so much history. The visit has been arranged with our local North Wilts MP, James Gray MP.

There will also be time after the tour and lunch for a wander around the area, as there are a lot of other interesting places to see.

Please see group visits diary for full details

Departure times and pick-up points:-

- 6.50am Royal Wootton Bassett,
Borough Fields car park, behind Sainsburys
- 7.00am Shaw Ridge, West Swindon (outside cinema)
- 7.15am Matalan, Greenbridge.

3.30pm Depart for Swindon

The cost for the Houses of Parliament is £13.50 per person which includes the tour, coach and driver's gratuity.

To contact click on [Susan trips](#)

Travel Study Group C & G

Slimbridge Wetland Centre

Tuesday 21st April 2020

The birthplace of modern conservation, Slimbridge Wetland Centre is set within 325 hectares against a spectacular Severn Estuary backdrop and was inspired by Sir Peter Scott.

Included in the entry ticket are:

A guided walk, after which you will have plenty of free time to explore the Wetlands.

The Visitors Centre and the Sloane Observation Tower with amazing views of the Cotswolds and the Forest of Dean. Accessed by either stairs or lift.

Toad Hall which houses frogs, toads, newts and salamanders from all around the world. Favourite characters at Toad Hall include the common toad, golden Columbian dart frog, red-eyed tree frog and our axolotl. See the most poisonous animal on the planet - The Golden Columbian Dart Frog.

Plus many other attractions

Departure times and pick-up points:-

8.45am Matalan

9.00am Ellendune Centre, Wroughton

9.15am Ashington Way, West Swindon

4.00pm (approx.) Depart for Swindon

Cost £26 pp includes: coach, entry, guided tour & driver's gratuity.

All members welcome.

To contact click on [Sylvia Blacklock](#)

Travel Group J
Weald & Downland Living Museum
14th May 2020

Discover rescued rural homes and buildings set in a beautiful landscape in the South Downs National Park. The collection over a 40 acre site tells the stories of the people who lived and worked on the downs for over 1000 years. With more than 50 buildings to explore from an Anglo Saxon hall house to an Edwardian tin church.

Departure time and pick up points:

8.30am Ellendune Centre Wroughton

8.45am Coate Water Bus Shelter (Opposite Sun PH)

4.00pm Depart for Swindon

Cost: £30pp

includes coach, admission to museum and driver's gratuity.

For further details contact:

To contact click on [Ken Ivie](#)

Gardening Group
Hidcote Manor Gardens
Tuesday 5th May 2020

The Gardening Group is running a trip to Hidcote Manor Gardens, a National Trust property near Chipping Campden.

Departure time 11.30 am from Lawn Community Centre.

Depart Hidcote Manor Gardens at 4.30 pm to return to Lawn Community Centre.

Cost £29 or £15 for National Trust Members to include coach, drivers gratuity and admission. All U3A members are welcome.

Contact:-

To contact click on [Jane Horey](#)

Gardening Group
Visit to Highgrove Royal Gardens
Wednesday 29th July 2020

There will be a two hour guided tour of the gardens and time for refreshments before returning home.

Departure time 10.30 am from Lawn Community Centre.

Depart Highgrove Royal Gardens at 4 pm to return to Lawn Community Centre.

Cost £35 to include coach, driver's gratuity, admission and guided tour of the gardens.

All U3A members are welcome.

To contact click on [Kath McDonald](#)

Day Trips Group

Canons Ashby & Great Central Railway

Friday June 5th 2020

This trip will be taking a group to either Canons Ashby (NT) or a Heritage Railway site.

Canons Ashby is a National Trust property with gardens. A tranquil Tudor manor house set in rare terraced gardens. Built by the Drydens using the remains of a medieval priory, the house and gardens have survived largely unaltered since 1710.

The little priory church is also included as part of your admission.

The Heritage Railway site is the Great Central Railway Heritage Line based at Loughborough. This is one of the larger Heritage, Steam Railways boasting over 16 steam engines and 17 diesel locomotives. It runs on eight and a quarter miles of double line from Loughborough to North Leicester.

This weekend is a special event with a theme of 1940's wartime, where in addition to steam engines running all day, they will be setting up 1940's themes on each of their 4 stations.

The cost for all passengers is £16.00 The cost covers the coach and driver's gratuity.

The entrance cost at Cannons Ashby for non NT members is £9.50 and this is payable at the site.

The cost of entry to Great Central Heritage Railway will be approximately £18-£20, payable at Loughborough.

All members welcome. Please visit Group Visits Diary for full details.

Departure times and pick-up points:-

7.45am Sainsbury's, Royal Wootton Bassett,

8.00am Shaw Ridge, West Swindon (coach parking outside cinema)

8.15am Matalan, Greenbridge

When booking please state whether you wish to go to Canons Ashby (CA) or Great Central Heritage Railway (GCHR).

Contact by clicking on [Susan Grice](#)

Day Trips Group

Bletchley Park

Friday 3rd July

Bletchley Park is a place of exceptional historical importance.

It remains highly relevant to our lives today and for the future. It is the home of British codebreaking and a birthplace of modern information technology. It played a major role in World War Two, producing secret intelligence which had a direct and profound influence on the outcome of the conflict.

Over the past twenty years Bletchley Park has become an internationally renowned heritage attraction, visited by people from around the world, which acknowledges the successes from the War and the people responsible for them. It celebrates their values: broad-minded patriotism, commitment, discipline and technological excellence. By presenting and explaining these achievements and these values, in the very place where they occurred, Bletchley Park brings together the dramatic history of the twentieth century with the challenges we face in the twenty first in our rapidly changing and technologically complex society.

To find out more and to plan your day visit

<https://bletchleypark.org.uk>

Departure times and pick-up points:-

8.00am Royal Wootton Bassett,

Borough Fields car park, behind Sainsburys

8.15am Shaw Ridge, West Swindon (coach parking outside cinema)

8.30am Swindon Bus Station

For those people with an existing Bletchley entry ticket the cost is £12.50. This includes the coach and driver's gratuity.

For those that need an entry ticket the cost is an additional £18.50. If we have 12+ people the entry cost is £15.70.

All members welcome.

When booking please indicate whether or not you need an Entry ticket to Bletchley.

Contact by clicking on [Kathrina Fairgrieve](#).

Travel Group G

Holiday to Thursford Christmas Spectacular

Monday 9th November 2020 to 13th November 2020

Staying at Palm Court Hotel, Great Yarmouth for 4 nights bed, breakfast and evening meal, the hotel has an indoor swimming pool.

We will visit Cambridge on the way there, a day visiting surrounding area, visit to Thursford for matinee performance, visit to Ely for Cathedral Christmas Gift and Food fair, visit to a place of interest on way home.

Cost £425 includes Deluxe ticket for show, entrance to Christmas market, single supplement £44, Sea view £28.

Deposit £95 by Monday 13th April. Balance by Monday 14th September. There will be no bookings taken after 1st September as this is the deadline for booking show tickets.

Booking form

Please send to 141 Upham Road, Swindon SN3 1DR.

Names and Address

Phone and email

Room type Please tick

Single Twin Double Seaview

Special requests

Next of kin name, address and contact details

I / We enclose a cheque for

Further details contact by clicking on [Sue York](#)

Delights & History of Liverpool

24th till 28th Aug 2020

5 days 4 nights

Blue Badge guide is included on days 2, 3, 4.

We stay at the centrally located 4* Marriott Hotel at Liverpool.

Overlooking Queen Square, facilities at the hotel include a restaurant, bar, indoor swimming pool, gymnasium and a sauna. All rooms are en suite and feature television, telephone, hairdryer, an in room safe, and tea & coffee making facilities.

Half board accommodation 4 nights DBB

Cost: £549 Single Supplement: £99

Day 1 We depart from our designated pick up points and en route to Liverpool we visit the Little Moreton Hall NT, also known as Old Moreton Hall, a moated half-timbered manor house, we have free time at leisure here. On arrival in Liverpool we check in at the centrally located Hotel for a four-night stay on half board basis.

Day 2 With our Blue Badge guide we tour Liverpool this morning taking in the splendour of the Metropolitan Roman Catholic Cathedral with its modern circular design and glorious multi coloured windows. During our visit we see The Lutyens Crypt and Treasury. Sir Edwin Lutyens designed a cathedral for Liverpool with a dome bigger than that of St Peter's Basilica in Rome. The Crypt is a beautiful, atmospheric space in its own right, and its Treasury contains a dazzling collection of sacred vessels and vestments. We continue to Liverpool Cathedral, one of the most iconic buildings of the city. This afternoon we visit the Slavery Museum in the Albert Dock. After you have free time to visit the Maritime Museum or Museum of Liverpool.

Day 3 Port Sunlight Village was built by the Lever family for their workers and the village has over 900 listed and preserved buildings, wide streets and gardens. During our guided tour we visit Christ Church. The church is late Victorian and was a gift of William Hesketh Lever. On arrival at the Lady Lever Art Gallery we have a guided tour of the works collected throughout the life of its founder, William Hesketh Lever, the first Lord Leverhulme. British 18th and 19th century paintings, 18th century furniture and outstanding collections of Wedgwood and Chinese porcelain are

among the treasures on show. We continue with our Blue Badge guide to the National Trust's Speke Hall, one of the country's most famous timbered houses. Originally built in 1530, its Great Hall and priest hole date from Tudor times. There is also fine Jacobean plasterwork and intricately carved furniture.

Day 4 We visit Crosby Beach this morning to see the internationally acclaimed artist Antony Gormley's work 'Another Place'. Best known for his controversial sculpture 'Angel of the North', 'Another Place' are massive installations of 100 cast iron figures, moulded from the artist's own body in the style that has become synonymous with his work. We then visit the Albert Dock, Liverpool's most visited attraction situated in a stunning World Heritage waterfront setting, where you may choose to visit the Tate, or the Merseyside Maritime Museum or Museum of Liverpool or take a leisurely lunch.

Day 5 After checking out of our hotel and before returning home en route to our hotel we enjoy a guided tour at the New Cathedral at Coventry. Seemingly with a defiance that summed up the resolute character of the English citizens during the darkest days of the Second World War, the decision to build the New Cathedral was made the day after the old one was destroyed in the blitz. During our tour we see the tapestry of Christ in Glory, by Graham Sutherland. The world's largest tapestry has hung in the cathedral since the building was consecrated in 1962. We also see the baptistery window, designed by John Piper and created by Patrick Reyntiens. We finally see the Chapel of Unity, with its detailed mosaic floor representing the nations of the world and lit by shafts of light from the narrow stained glass windows around the circumference of the star shaped chapel.

For further details contact by clicking on:

[**Ken Ivie**](#)

Quote, unquote

"Do a little bit of good where you are; those bits together can overwhelm the world"

Desmond Tutu

Keep Fit (Exercise to Music)

The time of the Saturday class at Coleview Community Centre has now changed to the later time of 11am.

For further information please contact me by clicking on.

[**Gill Hayes**](#)

Copy Dates

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

16th April 2020

Items for the June Newsletter must be received by

9th May 2020

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

14th May 2020

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
Data Protection	dpo@swindonu3a.org.uk
Electronic news distribution	enews@swindonu3a.org.uk
General enquiries	office@swindonu3a.org.uk
Groups' co-ordinator	group.coord@swindonu3a.org.uk
Health & Safety	healthandsafety@swindonu3a.org.uk
Newsletter contributions	newsletter@swindonu3a.org.uk
Office manager	office.manager@swindonu3a.org.uk
Office administration	office@swindonu3a.org.uk
Secretary	secretary@swindonu3a.org.uk
Speaker organisers (Monthly Meetings)	speaker.organiser@swindonu3a.org.uk
Treasurer	treasurer@swindonu3a.org.uk
Treasury Team for Accommodation Banking Visits	treasuryteam@swindonu3a.org.uk
Webmaster	webmaster@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	Avril Muirhead
<u>Vice-chairman</u>	vacant
Treasurer	Viv Dipper
Secretary	Margaret Goldie
Minutes Secretary	Patricia Scaplehorn
Office manager	Sylvia Alexander
New members	Sandie Mulcahy
Accommodation	Chris Ockwell
Webmaster	Alex Cranswick
Groups co-ordinator	Gill McKinnon
Health and Safety	Dave Maggs

Key Tasks (Non committee)

Office manager (Assistant)	Glenys Bettley
Administration adviser	Tony Hill
Speakers organiser	Cheryll Yeowell
assisted by	Beth Bailey

Office

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

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

Hours : Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 10am until 12 noon

Telephone : 01793 614629

(Answerphone operates when the office is closed)

Email : office@swindonu3a.org.uk

Web : www.swindonu3a.org.uk

Hard copy printed by Originzone

14 Ergo Business Park, Kelvin Road, Greenbridge, SN3 3JW

Telephone : 01793 616633

Email : sue@originzone.co.uk

Web : www.originzone.co.uk

Charity Number 298853