



Newsletter



Regent Circus March 2004
Photograph by
Stella Allen

February 2020

Chair Report January 2020

On behalf of the Management Committee I would like to wish all members a Happy New Year and continued success in the running of all our activities and to say thank you to all those who give of their time to make Swindon U3A the successful organisation that it is.

It is also good to receive thanks such as that from one of our speakers at the Monday meetings. In this newsletter you can read the appreciative letter sent by David Bradley OBE from the Medical Detection Dogs following his visit to us in November.

Change in the distribution of Newsletter/What's On

As I mentioned in my previous report, the committee have had to change the arrangements for the delivery of paper copies of the newsletter and What's On publications, as we no longer have enough volunteers to enable these to be delivered by hand. We have therefore arranged with the printer of the newsletter to mail out paper copies of the newsletter using printed address labels supplied by the Swindon U3A office. At present our funds allow us to pay for this, but in the future the committee may have to charge members for this service. The What's On leaflets will be mailed out from the office by the office volunteer team and to this end we have upgraded our franking machine to make this process easier and faster. We would encourage as many members as possible to read the newsletter and What's On on our website instead of taking a paper copy as obviously this keeps our costs down. It is also true that the information on our website is often more up to date than that in paper publications.

Yearbook editor

Sue Carvey, who did such a sterling job of editing our yearbook last year has decided to step down from this task. The committee would like to thank Sue for all her hard work in this regard in trialling the new system and for coping with the glitches, which inevitably cropped up, with such understanding. The committee are therefore looking for someone to take over this important task for this coming year. If you would be interested in helping with this task please contact me for further information.

Group Organiser Support

We are delighted that members continue to set up groups to learn about new topics and we do all we can to offer support and guidance for new group organisers. To this end seminars for new group organisers and for group organisers who have to arrange travel for their groups were held in January.

Complaints and discipline procedures

The committee have now amended the above in line with the guidance from the Third Age Trust. They will be available on our website in the near future. We have also adopted a Code of Conduct for all members also in line with Third Age Trust Guidance. This too will be available on our website shortly.

Third Age Trust U3A Day

Following a review of how the current U3A model works, it was recommended that the trust needs to raise the profile of the U3A movement and to make it more accessible to third agers. As part of raising the profile there will be a "U3A Day" on Wednesday 3rd of June. with national events and press and social media coverage of the day. It has also been suggested that local events could be held as part of this initiative. If you would like to organise any kind of event for Swindon U3A, please contact me.

Avril Muirhead

Monthly Meetings

Ellendune Centre, Wroughton

on the 2nd Monday of the month at 2.15pm

10th February 2020

Handwriting and Forgeries

John Jameson-Davis

A fascinating look at what handwriting can tell you about the writer and how an expert identifies forged signatures.

9th March 2020

Gloucester Docks Then and Now

Tony Condor

Gloucester Docks were linked to the sea by the widest and deepest waterway the world had ever seen. A financial disaster, it was a triumph for Gloucester and now adds considerable tourist interest to a midlands city.

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.



Sth West Region Volunteer Speaker
Medical Detection Dogs
48 Belle Vue Road
Salisbury
SP1 3YD

Telephone: 07544 689333

From: David Bradley OBE

12th November 2019

Dear Avril

What a great afternoon with you all!

On behalf of Medical Detection Dogs in the South West, many thanks for hosting and allowing me to provide a talk on the work of Medical Detection Dogs yesterday afternoon. Events such as these are so important as a means of spreading the word and raising funds for this inspiring charity.

I really enjoyed my experience of talking to so many of your club members. I could see that they were very interested in what I had to say. There was visible reaction and recognition of the capability that our bio dogs can offer and the life changing support our assistance alert dogs bring to those clients, who are lucky enough to be gifted with a fully trained companion and potential life saver.

As I take on more and more speaking events in the South West, it is very pleasing to see that we are contributing so well to such a great cause. The 'Dogs Saving Lives' motto certainly rings true when you see the capability and potential benefit of our dogs. Clearly, we would wish to realise our vision of rolling out an 'electronic nose' and harnessing the capabilities of our bio dogs at the heart of the NHS and also increase our gifting of our medical assistance and alert dogs. It was great to take so many questions from the audience and talk to members of your group prior to my departure, which reflected the interest that was taken.

In closing and on behalf of Medical Detection Dogs, I am most grateful for the fantastic £187.05 raised in fee/donations and £56.50 of merchandise sales, which will make such a difference. The event was a record in terms of donations and sales and attendance, which I was told exceeded 100! Once again, thank you very much for the invitation to talk to your group and the help of Beth Bailey in organising the event and, to all your ladies and gentlemen, who took the time to listen to my presentation and making me feel most welcome.

Yours Sincerely

David

A letter from our President

Pauline and I very much enjoyed this month's newsletter, especially the report of the walk from Chepstow to Tintern which brought back many memories of a similar walk about 25 years ago.

About 25 members, left the coach at Chepstow and followed the trail, mapped out by Fred Marsh our group leader, and the rain started almost immediately. As described so evocatively in the article by Jackie Hewitt, we plodded and slid uphill and down! We stopped under some trees trying to shelter from the elements, while we ate our sandwiches, and Fred announced that we had missed the turning to Tintern!

However, a little further on we could see the abbey ruins below, and we received the signal to go, and slid and stumbled our way down to the coach with thanks that no one had fallen. U3A members retained their good humour!

Nowadays, Pauline and I walk around Christchurch quay, admiring the view of river, sea and boats, for about half an hour, but at 97 and 87 we think that is far enough!

Best wishes to all Swindon U3A members, from Christchurch U3A.

Norman Richards

President

Life in a poem

Submitted by Lesley Basu

Prayers For The Earth

For once on the face of the earth let's not speak in any language
Let's stop for one second and not move our arms so much.
It would be an exotic moment without rush, without engines.
We would all be together in a sudden strangeness.
Fisherman in the cold sea would not harm whales
And the man gathering salt would look at his hurt hands.
Those who prepare green wars, wars with gas, wars with fire,
Victory with no survivors
Would put on clean clothes and walk about with their brothers
in the shade doing nothing.
What I want should not be confused with total inactivity,
Life is what it is about.
I want no truck with death.
If we were not so single minded about keeping our lives moving,
And for once could do nothing,
Perhaps a huge silence might interrupt this sadness of never
understanding ourselves
And of threatening ourselves with death.
Perhaps the earth can teach us when everything seems dead
and later proves to be alive.

By Pablo Neruda (1904-1973)

The ongoing debate over climate change brought to mind this poem by Pablo Neruda. Ricardo Eliécer Neftalí Reyes Basoalto born in Chile in 1904 is better known by his pen name and, later, legal name Pablo Neruda. He was a Nobel Prize winning poet, diplomat and politician. Neruda became known as a poet when he was 13 years old, and wrote in a variety of styles, including surrealist poems, historical epics, overtly political manifestos, a prose autobiography, and passionate love poems. However, he is not as well known as he should be due in part to difficulties in translating some of his works and also because of his communist views. He won the International Peace Prize in 1950 and was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1971.

Travel Group J

Visit to Wells

Wells, the smallest city in England, was the destination for Travel Group J's trip on the 28th of November.

Rather than taking the motorway, Paul, our driver, took a route through Bath. We were then able to enjoy seeing the beautiful countryside with the sun shining through the last of the colourful leaves still clinging to the trees.

We arrived at Wells in time to have some refreshment before we joined the guides who were to take us round the Bishop's Palace. As well as being given a good tour of the Palace and the chapel, we were also taken into the gardens especially to see the wells from which the city gets its name. These are not wells as we think of them today, but are small lakes formed by an underground river being forced to the surface by the geological features of the area. The views of the Cathedral, especially as reflected in the water, are fantastic. Definitely a place that it would be nice to revisit in the spring or summer when the gardens should be at their best.

As we crossed the drawbridge over the moat on leaving the Palace area some of us were lucky enough to see the swans. There was a pair of swans with one cygnet. The youngster had really learned how to tug on the rope, that rang the bell, that meant they would be fed.

As we were free to do our own thing after the tour, the party scattered in all directions. Many went into the magnificent cathedral, and some even found Vicars Close, which is said to be the oldest purely residential street in Europe, having been built in the 14th Century.

As we made our way past the cathedral, on our way back to the coach, the last rays of the sun were lighting up the colourful stones of its impressive west front. A wonderful sight which will be long remembered by those who saw it.

Isabel Habgood

News from the U3A Singing Group

I know it's February, and Christmas Events a distant memory, but I wanted to let you know about our first "sharing". Some Singers from the New U3A Singing Group, shared in the Carol Service at Toothill Methodist Church on Saturday 21st December. We were made very welcome by the coffee morning folk, and enjoyed singing a lovely selection of new and older carols with them. The variety of warm mince pies was amazing and they were delicious!

This new Singing Group was formed mainly for people who felt that they could not sing, as well as more experienced singers. So for a small group of us to lead the singing of a traditional carol "While Shepherds Watched their Flocks by Night" to the tune of "On Ilkley Moor" was quite brave. The other carollers joined in and one gentleman commented that it was lovely to sing this traditional carol to a traditional, well known Yorkshire melody.

At our first meeting last year, at least three people spoke of how they had been told at school that they could not sing! How sad that is, but I expect children are not told things like that today. The new Singing Group uses the ethos of the Natural Voice Network, which is basically that if you can talk, you can sing.

"Singing creates a sense of wellbeing, brings communities together and gives us the opportunity to create sounds of power and beauty." (<https://naturalvoice.net/>)

This year we will be singing some Old Time Songs, some traditional songs from the British Isles as well as some songs from other cultures. We also include the occasional hymn, as the melodies can be really wonderful. We meet in Toothill Church on the 2nd and 4th Monday of each month, from 9.45 to 11.45. No musical experience or knowledge is needed to join this Group. Perhaps it might be just for you?

Margaret Boyd

Group Organiser

U3A Wind Ensemble

The U3A Wind Ensemble would love to welcome some new members!

We play all styles of music adapted in 3-6 parts for our combination of instruments, which consists at the moment of flutes, clarinets, saxophones and a trombone and a bassoon. Players of the French horn and oboe would also be welcome.

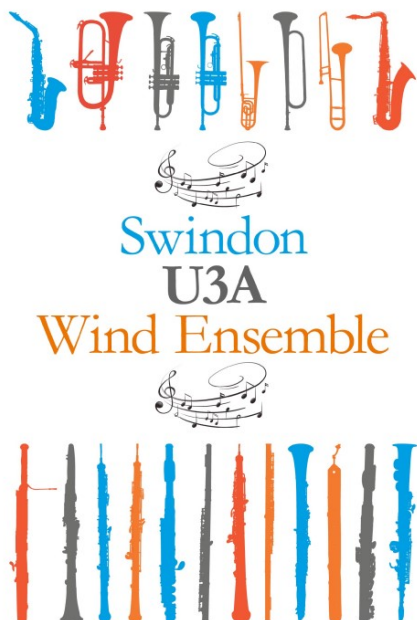
The standard of our players varies from very experienced to novices.

It's an informal, friendly group and open to all with an appropriate instrument and an ability to read music.

Come and try us out. We meet approximately fortnightly on Friday mornings at the Western Community Centre, Somerset Road, off Cheney Manor Road from 10am to 12noon.

Give me a ring or email to discuss.

Click on [Nina Stimson](#)



Travel Group J

Visit to Beaulieu

Thursday 20th February 2020

Come and join us on our day visit to Beaulieu in the heart of the New Forest National Park.

You will have the opportunity to explore Beaulieu's world famous National Motor Museum, Palace House and gardens. Also included is entry to Beaulieu Abbey with an exhibition on Monastic Life, Secret Army/SOE Exhibition and World of Top Gear, a ride on the UK's oldest Monorail (with informative commentary) and a trip on an open top veteran bus.

Departure times and pick up points

8.30am Wroughton Ellendune Centre

8.45am Marriott Roundabout

9.00am Coate Water

Cost £32pp to include Coach, entrance to Beaulieu and drivers gratuity.

To book a place on this trip, please contact:by clicking on the name

[Ann Ivie](#) or [Carol Clarke](#)

Travel Group B & D

Trip to Concorde Museum & Bristol Cathedral

Tuesday 25th February 2020

Departure times and pick up points

9.00 am Chapel Street

9.15 am Bus Station

9.30 am Ashington Way

Concorde Museum. Arrive 10.30 approx. Leave 2pm.

Bristol Cathedral. Arrive 2.30. Leave 4pm.

Cost £ 27

Contact [Margaret](#) or [Sue](#) by clicking on name

Day Trips Group

Postal Museum, Mail Train and Museums of London

Wednesday March 11th 2020

The collection at the Postal Museum Exhibition spans five centuries of history, covering everything from groundbreaking design and quirky technology to the intimacy of personal letters. The Mail Rail ride is a 15-minute journey under the streets of London - a miniature train into the 100-year-old original tunnels. The other half of our day will be spent at one of the following museums - your choice. The Natural History Museum, the V & A Museum or the Science Museum. Entry is free to all of these.

Departure times and pick-up points:-

- 7.30am Sainsbury's, Royal Wootton Bassett,
- 7.45am Swindon Bus Station
- 8.00am Matalan, Greenbridge

The cost is £28 per person which includes the Mail Train and Museum, coach and drivers gratuity. All members welcome. Please visit Group Visits Diary on Swindon U3A site for full details.

Contact by clicking on [Susan Grice](#):

Swindon Film Society

Swindon Film Society will be showing the following films at the Arts Centre, Devizes Road, Swindon starting at 19.45:

- 05.02.20 The Divine Order (Switzerland)
- 12.02.20 The Guilty (Denmark)

Further details can be viewed at swindonfilm.org.uk

Travel Study Group C & G

Gloucester and The Cheltenham Racecourse Experience

Monday 23rd March 2020

Visiting Gloucester in the morning, having free time to look around the docks - visit a museum or shop in Gloucester Quays and have lunch. The coach will then take us to Cheltenham Racecourse where we will have a behind the scenes guided tour of the facilities and the opportunity to walk to part of the course. The tour includes famous sights around the course and concludes with tea, coffee, and biscuits.

Please note that there is a slight slope back to the weights room.

Departure times and pick up points:

09:00 Ellendune Centre, Wroughton

09:15 Ashington Way.

09:30 Matalan, Greenbridge .

16:30 Leave Cheltenham racecourse

Cost: £30 pp to include coach, admission to the racecourse and driver's gratuity.

If interested, please contact [Jane Caudwell](#)

As we have to pay for the Racecourse Tour in advance, it may not be possible to give a full refund if you are unable to attend.

All members are welcome

Exercise To Music - Change of Day & Venue

Please note the regular Tuesday class that meets at Gorse Hill at 2.30pm will now be held on a Wednesday at Coleview Community Centre, Towcester Road, Swindon SN3 4AS at the earlier time of 2.00pm. We commence there on Wednesday 29th January and there are still places available for this class as well as the Saturday class held at Coleview at 10.00am. Come & join us to get fitter, feel healthier & have some fun!

Gillian Hayes

Aviation Group

Visit to the Royal Air Force Museum London

Friday 24 April 2020

The Royal Air Force Museum, London celebrates and commemorates the Royal Air Force.

Three new innovative galleries highlight the first 100 years of the service. The rest of the site includes the multi award winning First World War in the Air Galleries. Bomber Command Hall and Historic Hangars are also open offering a great day out.

Departure times and pick ups:

8.00am Brewery St Car Park, Highworth

8.20am Ellendune Centre, Wroughton

8.25am Downes View / Marlborough Rd

8.30am Coate Water

4.00pm Depart for Swindon

Cost £17 Includes Coach, entry to museum and drivers gratuity. All members and friends welcome.

Contact by clicking on [Ken Ivie](#)

The Arts Society Kennet & Swindon

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

17th February 2020 'Rebuilding the Town of Ypres'

16th March 2020 10.30 AGM. 11am 'Decadence and Dreams' Jewellery From 20th Century.

20th April 2020 'The Field of the Cloth of Gold'

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

ConcertGoers

The Anvil, Basingstoke

Thursday, April 30th 2020

An evening concert with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra. On the programme is Martucci Notturmo, Brahms Violin Concerto with Tamsin Little on her farewell to the concert stage tour, Prokofiev Symphony no 1 (the Classical) and Rimsky Korsakov Capriccio Espagnol. The concert will be preceded at 6.30pm by a free talk, likely to be from one of the performers about an aspect of the programme.

The cost is £42.00 if we get 30 takers (rebate on the day if we get over 30 and up to 40). This includes coach travel and driver's gratuity. Cheques payable to Swindon U3A, to Cindy Matthews, (contact Cindy below for address), with a note saying where you want to be picked up by the coach (Downsview/Marlborough Road junction, Bus Station or Ashington Way, W. Swindon)

Pick up times will be confirmed nearer the time. Please apply by February 21st.

Queries to: by clicking on name

[Cindy Matthews](#)

or

[Nina Stimson](#)

SWINDON MODEL RAILWAY EXHIBITION

MODRAIL 2020

14th March 2020

10.00 am to 4.30 pm

at STEAM Museum

www.swindonmodelrailwayclub.com



Top Quality Layouts - Demonstrators - Trade Support
Wheelchair Friendly - Children Under 16 Free - Refreshments

Could you volunteer
to listen to children
read in school?

Why not become a
Schoolreader?

We provide volunteers to give free one-to-one reading practice to children in their primary schools

To become a volunteer you will need a good command of English and a bit of spare time each week of the school year (we ask that you commit for a minimum of a year). Schoolreaders will match you to an appropriate local school. Our volunteers really enjoy being Schoolreaders; 99% say they would recommend the scheme to someone considering volunteering.



JOIN US! – you can make a real
difference to a child's life.

To find out more and to register, please visit
www.schoolreaders.org

Quote, Unquote

Music gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination and life to everything.

Plato

Copy Dates

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

13th February 2020

Items for the April Newsletter must be received by

7th March 2020

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

12th March 2020

All contributions must be sent to the Editors 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
Vice-chairman	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
Newsletter team	vacant
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