



# Newsletter

## September 2024



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## Chairs Blog September 2024



I'm just back from our 2024 Open Day that was held at St Joseph's Catholic College and what a fantastic day it was! There were lots of Group Organisers (GOs) there on hand to help with enquiries about their own individual group activities and to take down details of people who were interested in joining the group or to go on to a waiting list if the Group was already full.

From my numerous visits around all the various tables, I could see there was a lot of interest in general at all the group tables, this was really good to see. I also took the opportunity to introduce myself to some of the GOs I'd not met before or just have a chat with existing and potential new members.

The feedback I got from everyone about the Open Day and our u3a organisation overall was really positive, this is fantastic and only confirms to me that our Management Committee and all our GOs are doing a great job.

I would like to personally thank Linda and all the team for the fantastic effort they put in to get this Open Day organised and running so smoothly, Linda even managed to convince her daughter to help out on the day, well done to Linda for that and a big thanks to your daughter too. I would also like to thank the Trustees for manning the Enquiries Desk, the Office volunteers for manning the New Members and the Renewals areas, plus all the car parking volunteers who did a great job making sure everyone knew where to go.

We wouldn't be able to hold events like this without all the willing volunteers helping out.

Thanks for a great day out, everyone!

Vince Williams  
[chair@swindonu3a.org.uk](mailto:chair@swindonu3a.org.uk)

## Monthly Meetings September 2024 to December 2024

All Meetings are held at 2.00 pm in Ellendune Community Centre SN4 9LW (unless otherwise indicated).

If you plan to attend Monthly meetings, please remember to book by either:

1. Go to the website [swindonu3a.org.uk](http://swindonu3a.org.uk) (just log in and click on the event you want to attend listed on the page) or
2. Telephone the office on 01793 614629

### Monday 9 September 2024 – 2.00 pm – Ellendune Community Centre

#### HENRY VIII AND THE FIELD OF CLOTH OF GOLD

Renowned historian and speaker Dr Gill White will be talking about Henry VIII and the Field of Cloth of Gold – which was a chance to compete for honour and glory and become ‘top dog’. She will explore the reasons for the celebrations and the aftermath of this magnificent, yet futile, event.



Source: Dr Gill White

*Editor's Note: There's a fascinating fictional account of the event in "Wolf Hall" by Hilary Mantel: well worth a read.*

## **Monday 14 October 2024 – 2.00 pm – Ellendune Community Centre**

### **THE COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVES COMMISSION**



**WW! Tyne Cot Cemetery Ypres Salient Belgium (Source: Editor)**

Hear about the work of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and how it manages and cares for the memorials, cemeteries and headstones in 23,000 locations across 150 countries.

Their heritage estate covers horticulture too – looking at the cemeteries, monuments and all the gardens and landscape together – and taking a conservation-based approach to how best to look after these in the future.



**WW11 D-Day Bazenville Normandy (Source Editor)**

### **Further in the Future**

**Monday 11 November 2024 – AGM**

**Monday 9 December 2024 –Christmas Party!**



## Group News

### 1 U3A Concertgoers (from Helen, Roger and Robin)

The group enjoyed a fine trip in May to the new Bristol Beacon Hall, to hear the RPO play Saint-Saëns, Grieg and Sibelius, with a superb cello soloist.

Our next trip is **Thursday October 24th** to Birmingham Symphony Hall, including a visit to central Birmingham and the area around the Hall, with the outstanding new Library and the canals with cafes and restaurants.

#### Programme: City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra

- **William Still**, Threnody in memory of Jean Sibelius- 'a stunning tribute'.
- **Prokofiev**, Piano Concerto No2 with soloist Yeol Eum Son. 'It crackles with energy'
- **Sibelius**, Symphony No 5. Exuberant, inspired by the sight of flying swans in the sunset. 'One of my greatest experiences!', he wrote. 'It begins with the breadth and majesty of a vast, unfolding Nordic landscape'.

**Details:** The concert is at 2:15 pm, but we arrive in the city earlier, around 12:15 with time to look around, shop and get lunch.

**Pick-up points:** Swindon Downsview Road and Highworth Brewery St Car Park, approximate times around 10 am. Coach drop off points in the city centre and then at the Hall. The concert ends around 4:15 pm.

**The cost for 30 people:** £59 including good seats, coach and driver's gratuity, but if 40 people come, the cost is only £52 and you will get a £7 refund pp cash on the coach.

#### HOW TO BOOK:

To book, send to Roger Marsden ( [RMarsden1938@gmail.com](mailto:RMarsden1938@gmail.com) ) Tel [07810 722908](tel:07810722908)), an email with all the following information: (NB – we must have your mobile phone no and desired pickup point):

Name(s)

Address

**Important - Mobile Phone No**

Email address

No of tickets

Amount paid (£59 per person) and method of payment

**Important - Pickup Point desired**

#### HOW TO PAY:

Please pay £59 by BACS Bank Transfer (*preferred*) to Swindon u3a Trips account, sort code 40-52-40, account no 00022106. Please use the reference 'Yourname Concert' eg 'Smith Concert'. Alternatively, you can post a cheque made out to Swindon u3a to Roger Marsden, 103 Goddard Avenue, Swindon SN1 4HU.

Further info? Please email [RMarsden1938@gmail.com](mailto:RMarsden1938@gmail.com) or [Helen.Holly007@gmail.com](mailto:Helen.Holly007@gmail.com)

## **2 New Video Group** (from Peter Dore)

Hello everyone, my name is Pete Dore, and I'm thrilled to be leading the video group here.

Whether you're a beginner looking to explore the world of videography or an experienced filmmaker seeking collaboration and inspiration, our group has something for everyone. We'll provide a platform to share ideas, learn from each other's experiences, and work together to create stunning videos.

I envision our group as a vibrant community of video enthusiasts who support, encourage and inspire one another.

If you're interested in joining our group send me an email. I'll provide you with more details about our meetings, workshops, and upcoming projects.

So grab your cameras, fire up your creativity and let's embark on this filmmaking journey as a team. Our Meetings take place 2nd Tuesday in the month

Pete [dorepeter96@gmail.com](mailto:dorepeter96@gmail.com) & David

## **3 Swindon u3a reaches Switzerland:** from Linda Young (German Group)

You may be interested to see this. The attached article is about my German group from a Swiss newspaper. The daughter of one of the participants in the group lives in Zurich and comes to our class when she is in the UK. She brought her local newspaper (Höngger Zeitung) for us to read and study and they published an account of her visit.

They make some nice comments about how the group encourages social activity and how language learning keeps the brain active.

<https://hoengger.ch/ein-hoengger-in-england/>

#### **4 Aviation Group (from Ken Ivie)**

##### **Visit To. Army Museum of Flying Middle Wallop**

*Friday 18th October 2024*

Tucked away just a few miles northeast of Salisbury lies the Museum of Army Flying adjacent to the Army Air Corps Airfield at Middle Wallop.

Devoted to telling the history of British Army Flying, two large hangars house the impressive journey of British soldiers in the air from the pioneering days of balloons and kites to the Glider Pilot Regiments dropping At Arnhem right through to the modern chapter of helicopter operations.

Overlooking the active airfield is the Apache Cafe, this is an excellent spot to enjoy a bite to eat or a drink whilst admiring all manner of AAC aircraft.

Departure times and pick-up points:

9.00 am Ellendune Centre Wroughton  
9.10 am Downs View/ Marlborough Rd  
9.15 am Coate Water, bus stop opposite The Sun PH

4.00 pm Depart for Swindon

Cost £31 per person which includes entry to museum, coach and driver's gratuity.  
All members and friends are welcome.

Contact:

Ken Ivie on 01793 845483 or email [kenivie@uwclub.net](mailto:kenivie@uwclub.net)

### **New Members' Meeting Reminder**

This academic year, we have seen a pattern of significant numbers of members joining throughout the year as well as at the start of our programme in September.

We are holding our annual

**New Members' Meeting on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> October  
at Coleview Community Centre SN3 4AS: 10.00 am- 12.00 a.m.**

This is open to anyone who has joined us since last year's meeting In November. More details to follow in next month's newsletter.

Jill Kelly (Membership Liaison)

## Dates for your Diary

*(If you have anything you think would be of member-wide interest, contact me and I will include it here. Editor)*

**9 September 2 pm: Ellendune Hall Wroughton**  
**The Field of the Cloth of Gold:** details above

**12 October New Members Meeting:** details above

**14 October 2024: Monthly Meeting 2 pm – Ellendune Hall Wroughton**  
**The Commonwealth War Graves Commission** details above

**11 November 2024: Annual General Meeting**

**9 December 2024: Christmas Party**

### Volunteer support required for u3a website



We are looking for someone to join our IT team to help us manage our website content. This will mainly involve adding and removing pictures and text to keep the site content fresh and up to date and aligned to the u3a brand. We would expect this role to take up to one a day a month, spread over the month.

You don't need to be an IT expert, if you can use apps like Facebook, MS Office and/or folders on a pc, you have the skills we need and we will provide training. Interested?

If so, please contact [itsupport@swindonu3a.org.uk](mailto:itsupport@swindonu3a.org.uk).



## **Life in a Poem** -submitted by Lesley Basu

*Another beautiful poem from **Caroline Mellor** which, at this time of year when the children are returning to school, underlines how language is not just a means of communication but is deeply connected both to the imagination and to our cultural history.*



### ***“Words are world-makers”— Robert MacFarlane***

We need to teach the children the old words,  
words like brabble and grubble,  
twitter-light and clinkerbell;  
words which dance and trip and slip  
and drip like honey off the tongue

Teach them that a hazy halo of cloud  
around the moon is called a moonbroch  
and that swiftly moving clouds are named cairies;  
how a vixen’s wedding is a sunny shower of rain,  
and that a single sunbeam breaking through thick cloud  
is known as a messenger

Teach them to know the seasons and scents  
of queen of the meadow and bride of the sun,  
how to tell Jupiter’s staff from fairy fingers  
and which roses bloom with the strawberry moon

Teach them to spot pricklebacks in the tottlegrass,  
how to recognise a smeuse or a bishop-barnaby,  
when to watch the sky for flittermice and yaffles,

and to pay attention to the dumbeldore and mousearnickle  
as she graces the lazy leahs of summer

Teach them a few of the old Sussex words for mud,  
like gubber and slub and stodge and pug,  
so they know that the precious soil beneath their toes  
is anything but worthless dirt

Teach them to be users and keepers and makers  
of the words which bring the land alive:  
a storybook, where everything has its rightful place,  
including us;  
where the wilds are fearful and filled with magic  
and people do noble things, and nothing is impossible

In this world of harsh new words —  
words like planetary dysmorphia and solastalgia,  
extinction debt and grief mitigation,  
megadrought and megafire,  
anthropogenic, pyrocene,  
words which alarm and get stuck in our throats  
describing a world which our hearts cannot grasp —  
we need to teach the children the old words,  
so that if they should feel lost,  
the old words might colour for them  
a warm and breathing, living map,  
a light to guide them safely home. *by Caroline Mellor*

### **Glossary**

brabble — to argue loudly about matters of no importance  
grubble — to grope around in the dark for something that you can't see  
clinkerbell — icicle  
twitter-light — twilight  
queen of the meadow — meadowsweet  
bride of the sun — calendula  
Jupiter's staff — mullein  
fairy fingers — foxglove  
\*prickleback — hedgehog  
\*tottle grass — high grass  
smeuse — the gap in the base of a hedge made by the regular passage of a small animal  
\*bishop-barnaby — ladybird  
\*yaffle — green woodpecker  
\*flittermouse — bat  
\*dumbledore — bumblebee  
\*mousearnickle — dragonfly  
leah — meadow, clearing

Open Day Feedback and welcome to the new u3a Year

\*gubber — black mud of rotting organic matter

\*pug — a kind of loam, particularly the sticky yellow Wealden clay

\*stodge — thick puddingy mud

\*slub — thick mud

***The words marked with an asterisk are native to the Sussex Weald.***

*This poem reminds me of the Dalesman, a Yorkshire dialect magazine that my father had when I was a boy. It seems a pity the old words are dying away and succeeded by a sea of cliché and lack of local heritage awareness. It would be fascinating if members could come up with their own dialect poems or links. Editor*

## **Swindon u3a Contacts**

<b>Chair</b>	Vince Williams	<a href="mailto:chair@swindonu3a.org.uk">chair@swindonu3a.org.uk</a>
<b>Vice Chair</b>	Chris Birch	<a href="mailto:vice_chair@swindonu3a.org.uk">vice_chair@swindonu3a.org.uk</a>
<b>General Secretary</b>	Monica King	<a href="mailto:secretary@swindonu3a.org.uk">secretary@swindonu3a.org.uk</a>
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<b>Health &amp; Safety</b>		<a href="mailto:secretary@swindonu3a.org.uk">secretary@swindonu3a.org.uk</a>
<b>All committee members</b>		<a href="mailto:committee@swindonu3a.org.uk">committee@swindonu3a.org.uk</a>

### **Office**

Swindon u3a Office, Gorse Hill Community Centre, Chapel Street, Swindon, SN2 8DA  
(entry is by the middle door on the right-hand side of the building)

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

**Telephone:** 01793 614629 (Answerphone operates when the office is closed)

**Email:** [office@swindonu3a.org.uk](mailto:office@swindonu3a.org.uk)

**Web:** [www.swindonu3a.org.uk](http://www.swindonu3a.org.uk)

Swindon u3a Charity Number 2988533

## Last Word

This edition is later than usual so we can include feedback from the Open Day. Thanks to Vince for such a positive report and images of the event.

Future publication dates are the first three days of the month. Please send me copy for the newsletter and other inclusions to me by 21 of the previous month. Format: Word documents please and images sent as jpegs as it's much easier to edit them.

This is what your u3a Chair does in his spare time: (Field Archery)



Thank you to the Concert Goers and Aviation Groups for including details of forthcoming trips. This shows the range and diversity of our membership activity.

It will be good to see the Video group active, and potentially recording some of our activities.

I've just looked at the total number of members on the email and contact list. As of 4 September, we have 1773 available members on the records. This shows how popular u3a is in the Swindon area and refutes the misleading view of Swindon as a cultural desert.

Future newsletters will provide more information of u3a centrally; how it relates to our local organisation and examples of what other associations are doing. We have a good story to tell locally, but can always learn from others, so let me know what's going on in your group so I can include it in future newsletters.

Copy for the October newsletter to me please by 21<sup>st</sup> September.

Chris Firth  
Editor