



Newsletter

learn, laugh, live

April 2024



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April Update from the Trustees

We are pleased to welcome Vince Williams as our new Chairperson and wish him well as he takes up his post with immediate effect.

It is good to be able to report that several members have stepped forward in response to recent appeals for volunteers. We now have some new and potential recruits for our various teams and sub-committees. The office team, the publicity team and the events committee are all looking forward to welcoming new faces.

With our indispensable Group Organisers and approximately 50 other volunteers, we hope to continue supporting and developing our u3a. We currently have over 1600 members and continue to offer over 130 activity groups.

Meanwhile, the Third Age Trust, our over-arching body, is undergoing a review of its structure and how it operates. Some Trustees have attended presentations on Zoom in order to keep informed and to respond when required.

Broadly, the proposal is that the existing TAT Board of Trustees would be made smaller and would concentrate solely on Governance and Finance. A new 'Council of Representatives' would be established and provide a forum for discussion on wider issues raised by **u3as**.

Members wanting to learn more can find the 'Fit for the Future' presentations on the TAT website.

The Trustees

Term 3 group payments

Term 3 begins on the 1st April and Group Organisers are currently agreeing any payments due for the term. We will be sending out a request for payment after Easter and, as a reminder, you can pay by:

- Clicking on the link in the Swindon u3a *Request for Payment* email, this generates a PayPal payment transaction
- Sending a payment through an online bank transfer
- Coming to the office or a monthly meeting and making a contactless payment, in person, using your bank card
- Calling the office, and the office will send you a safe text or email to enter your bank card details remotely. You will need to have a smart phone or email for this.

If you are unable to pay through any of these methods, support is available. Please contact **Linda Young** in the first instance, by replying to the email or via the Office (01793 614629).

Report from March's Monthly Meeting

5 of the 50 – BASED ON HER SWINDON IN 50 BUILDINGS BOOK – ANGELA ATKINSON



At our meeting in March, Swindon-based Angela Atkinson presented her favourite five buildings in Swindon, taken from her book 'Swindon in 50 Buildings'. Angela is well-known as a champion of the town via her Born Again Swindonian blog, started over a decade ago when blogging was the latest thing. Having taken a Travel Writing Module during her last year at university, she was advised to write about what she saw when she walked. This included the West Swindon Sculpture Trail, encompassing far more than the Diana Dors' statue outside the Shaw Ridge cinema!

Deciding on what to include in a book that tells aspects of Swindon's story in its buildings was tricky. The town has some 659 listed buildings. Eventually she went for geographic spread (Swindon is a large town now and has buildings with stories right across it) and

different periods of time. It is a common misapprehension that listed buildings must be old, but a building can be listed after thirty years – or even ten.

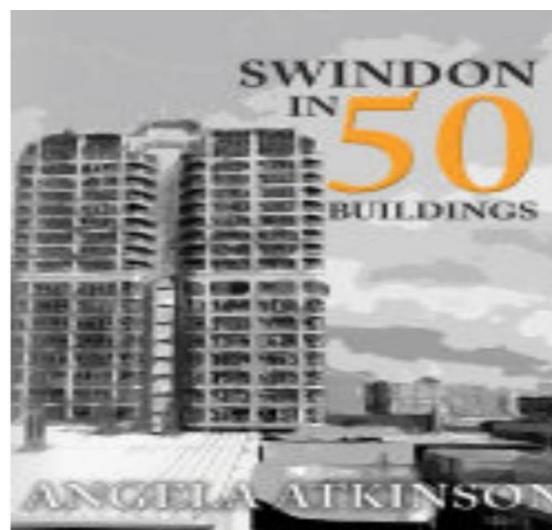
The first of Angela's favourites is the **David Murray John Tower**. The architect responsible was Douglas Stephen (considered one of the five great architects most of us have never heard of). The Tower is thought to have affinities to a design of Frank Hampson's for 'Dan Dare, Pilot of the Future' and has even been named in a list of five extraordinary buildings in the world by a respected authority on architecture. Sleek and sophisticated, clad in stainless steel, the futuristic look of the building reflected the forward-looking aspirations of the town at the time.

In second place is the **Brunel Centre**. Its plaza with black and white floor and shops was described at the time as Swindon having acquired a touch of Milan. Shops with nearby parking and easy delivery access was also considered revolutionary at the time.

The Crumpled Horn, Eldene, is at No 3. A 1970's themed pub, it acquired listed building status in 2018. Historic England described it as "...a good example of Wilson-Smith's innovative and eccentric style. In common with all the pubs he designed, it illustrates his interest in multi-level plans. Built as an irregular eight-sided polygon on a sloping site, the pub contains a single bar area which takes the unusual plan form of a spiralling 'nautilus shell'. The shape creates intimate drinking spaces on different levels, as well as reflecting the 'horn' of the pub's name".

In fourth place is the **Kiosk Café** in the Town Gardens. Built in 1914, it is now Grade II listed and began life as a GWR trade stand. In that capacity it travelled the country visiting shows and exhibitions until eventually being bought by the Council. It now forms a visible link between Old Town and New Swindon.

Finally, in fifth place is the **North Wilts Aerated Water Manufactory** (also known as The Bottle Factory) in Lansdown Road. In 1854, Edward Robert Ing set up a chemist shop on Wood Street and in 1868 he bought several plots of land along The Sands (now Bath Road) and built Walton House. In 1870 the Manufactory was built to the rear of Walton House. No bottles were made there, but were filled with water containing dissolved CO₂ (aerated water). In the 1970s it produced the Arkells-owned Ace brand of soft drinks. After closing in the late 1970s, the building was home to Wyvern Television in 1981. A property developer has now renovated the entire building into flats whilst keeping many original features



What's On



Monday 8 April 2024 – 2.00 pm – Ellendune Community Centre, Barrett Way, Wroughton, Swindon SN4 9LW

THE GOLDEN AGE OF CHILDREN'S TELEVISION

Join author and TV historian Jeff Evans on a journey through your childhood as he tells the fascinating story of children's television in the UK.

Jeff's colourful talk covers the period from the start of television to the 1970s, truly a golden age for those of us who grew up glued to the small screen when we returned home from school. Some people will remember the earliest TV stars such as Muffin the Mule and Andy Pandy; others will recall with great fondness series such as Crackerjack, Ivor the Engine, Thunderbirds, The Magic Roundabout and the rather spooky The Singing Ringing Tree. This talk features them all, and much more besides.

This fully illustrated talk will bring back a wealth of happy memories and Jeff will ensure that there are plenty of surprises along the way.

Monday 13 May 2024 – 2.00 pm – Ellendune Community Centre, Barrett Way, Wroughton, Swindon SN4 9LW

'WILDLIFE WANDERINGS' WITH DAVID BAILEY, WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER

David's talk 'Wildlife Wanderings' explains equipment and time required to capture images, including the stories behind them. He will show images of a leveret having a bad hare day, fishy goings on with puffins, otters, deer rutting, beavers munching and many other feathery and furry species. There will also be a quiz – some of the answers are not what you might expect!

Born into a New Forest family that bred the famous ponies, David Bailey has always had a love for the countryside and the creatures who make it their home.

Having served an apprenticeship in engineering, he never really picked up the camera until he moved to the Brecon Beacons during 2006. Self-taught in photography, he was quickly persuaded to turn professional in 2008 and won the Welsh Wildlife Photographic Award in 2011. Many other awards have followed and he has had his work published many times in newspapers and magazines, including The Countryman.

Two chance meetings with Dr Rhys Jones of Cardiff University and star of the BBC series Rhys Jones Wildlife Patrol, led to David being drafted on to the production team working as consultant, cameraman, photographer and occasionally in front of the camera. He has also appeared with Nick Baker on Springwatch and made many media appearances on both TV and radio.

Monday 10 June 2024 – 2.00 pm – Ellendune Community Centre, Barrett Way, Wroughton, Swindon Sn4 9LW

SUMMER PARTY

Back by popular demand the Swindon u3a Summer Party. There'll be fun and games and singing and quizzes. It's a great chance to meet other Swindon u3a members and maybe make a new friend. Those in the know also come for the special summer party CAKE!

Put the date in your diary now.

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

- 1. Going onto the website 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**
- Bookings can be taken up to 11.30 am on the morning of the meeting.**

Group News

Painting Together 2 group



Painting Together 2 has spaces available in the group. We meet in the Des Moffat Western Community Centre, Somerset Road, Rodbourne Cheney every second and fourth Friday of the month between 2pm and 4pm. We are a small friendly group meeting in an ideal room with plenty of daylight, adult size tables and chairs. We use any medium and members bring their own materials.

If you are interested in joining us please get in touch by emailing annehembury@hotmail.com or cj52@talktalk.net

SWINDON u3a CONCERTGOERS

Our last concert of this season is to the completely-refurbished Bristol Beacon (formerly, Colston Hall) on **Friday, May 17** at 7:30pm. It's fairly central in Bristol and we'll have a bit of time to get a meal or do shopping/exploring/galleries in the centre. There are still some spaces.



Royal Philharmonic Orchestra

- **Saint-Saëns Cello Concerto**, with acclaimed soloist Zlatomir Fung, the RPO's Soloist in Residence, "... technically superb with a warm tone and emotional depth that suggest years of experience, though he's just 25"
- **Greig, Peer Gynt Suite No1**, full of great tunes including 'Morning', 'Anitra's Dance', and 'Hall of the Mountain King'
- **Sibelius, Symphony No 2**, "From pastoral beginnings to a soul-stirring finish, it is music of elemental power, spring-like freshness and truly epic grandeur".

Details: Concert at 7:30pm on Friday May17. We understand that *all* ticket holders (us all) can go to the *pre-concert talk* about the music we're going to hear, at 6:25pm in the Lantern Hall - details to be confirmed.

Pick-up points: Highworth Brewery St and Swindon Downs View Road. Approximate times around 3:15 to 3:30pm. Arrive Bristol around 4:30pm, drop off points in the city centre and then at the Hall. Concert ends around 9:30pm.

Cost for 30 people £47 including good seats, coach and driver's gratuity. If 40 people come, you will get a *£5 refund* pp cash on the coach.

HOW TO BOOK:

Please book and pay by 31st March. To book, send to Roger Marsden (RMarsden1938@gmail.com, Tel 07810 722908), an email with all the following information: (NB - it's vital that we have your mobile phone no and desired pickup point):-

Name(s)

Address

Important - Mobile Phone No

Email address

No of tickets

Amount paid (£47 pp) and method of payment

Important - Pickup Point desired

HOW TO PAY:

Please pay £47 by BACS Bank Transfer (*preferred*) to Swindon u3a Trips account, sort code 40-52-40, account no 00022106. Please use 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 or Helen.Holly007@gmail.com

Helen Harris, Roger Marsden and Robin Clegg

Travel group Scotland holiday June 2024!

Last chance to take up this exciting opportunity for Swindon u3a members! Please do get in touch if interested. The more the merrier and the cheaper!



Glasgow with Swindon U3A

7 Days - Tue 4th - Mon 10th June 2024

An exciting opportunity for Swindon U3A members!
Please do get in touch if interested.

Price based on 20 people is: £875 per person
Price based on 25 people is: £795 per person
Price based on 30 people is: £740 per person
Single Room Supplement: +£210 per person
In addition, there will be some admission charges.
The final price depends on take up of places.

Itinerary: We will visit Leighton Hall on our journey to Scotland. A privately owned estate advertised as "no stuffy museum". Well known for its collection of objet d'arts, gardens and Woodson's walks. We will now visit Levens Hall on the homeward journey. During our stay there will be five days of visits, Robbie Burns' place of birth, Transport Museum, Falkirk Wheel for the worlds one & only rotating boat lift, Kelpies for its magnificent equine sculptures that stand proudly at 30 metres tall, Kelvin Museum, Glasgow Botanic Gardens, Loch Lomond – an optional boat trip, local whisky distillery visit and a guided coach tour of Glasgow.



Our hotel:

Westerwood Golf & Country Club, Cumbernauld near Glasgow prides itself on more than just its location, the grounds are second to none without even touching on the 18-hole championship golf course & the spectacular surrounding Campsie Hills. With the 148 sumptuous bedrooms, Swimming pool, Jacuzzi, Leisure club and a range of lavish spa treatments available you will not find yourself short of space to relax.

Holiday Inclusions:

- Price to include all coach travel
- 6 nights Bed and Breakfast and Evening Meal at the hotel



To Book:

If you are interested, please contact Group Organiser Jane Caudwell.

Email: philipbaylay@virginmedia.com
Mobile: 07471202507

A deposit of £40 per person due by 12th Feb 2024.
Final balances will be payable by 8th April 2024.

Cheques made payable to SWINDON U3A

Insurance: Barnes Coaches Ltd feel it is important that you are covered by adequate travel Insurance on your holiday) it is optional, and you are welcome to arrange your own. Barnes Coaches Ltd are acting as an Appointed Representative and can arrange Travel Insurance through Wightsure Insurance Group who are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. Insurance is by Great Lakes Insurance UK as underwritten by Ergo Travel Insurance Service Ltd. If you would like more details please let your group leader know your home and email address so we can contact you about this. Travel Insurance for this 7 day holiday if required is £40 each.

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Deposit of £40.00 per person. Cheques payable to SWINDON U3A Balance will be payable by 8th April 2024. Cheques payable to SWINDON U3A

If you are interested, please contact Group Organiser Jane Caudwell - email philipbaylay@virginmedia.com or mob 07471202507.



U3a On-Line Learning Events

u3a members can join a wide range of online talks, workshops and courses for free with their membership! Most of these opportunities are presented by members themselves; sharing their knowledge or skills with others across the movement. We also have a wide range of talks on offer from well-known speakers and organisations.

To see what's on, go to u3a.org.uk/events and choose the 'on-line events' option.

You might also consider offering a talk or workshop – if so get in touch at events@u3a.org.uk or learning@u3a.org.uk

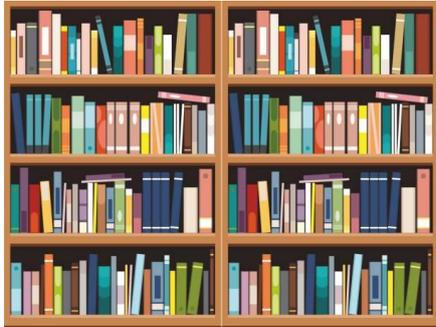
Online events are hosted on Zoom. There are also some '[How to Guides](#)' for using Zoom if you are unfamiliar with the platform. Don't forget u3a also runs many projects, initiatives and competitions available for all members to get involved in too.

Some On-line Events in April include:

- The History of Pleasure Gardens
- Introduction to AI Chatbots
- Electing the US President
- Laughter Yoga
- Live Cookery Demonstrations
- The Arts and Crafts of May Morris
- Bollywood Laughter Yoga Dance
- AI News
- The Key to Longevity
- The Road to Clear Water
- Mindfulness and Meditation
- Sonnets of Gerald Manley Hopkins
- The Climate Crisis
- Secrets of the Human Brain

Life in a Poem submitted by Lesley Basu

Born Paul Millicheap in Birmingham, Bilston has become " the Poet Laureate of Twitter " ! He has published several collections of poetry and has done much to popularise poetry as a medium of comment on modern life. His first novel : "Diary of a Somebody " was shortlisted for the Costa award . This cheeky example is a wry observation on our addiction to screens and instant gratification.



Book Group by Brian Bilston

**The last Thursday of every month was Book Group,
When the books would gather together
To discuss Graham.**

**“He has barely touched me I am sure I am
Only here so he can show off to his friends,”
Complained Ulysses, in a stream of self-consciousness.**

**“Consider yourself lucky,” cried Fifty Shades of Grey.
“He’s always got his dirty hands all over me. Look at my cracked
spine and turned down corners!”**

**“At least he’s prepared to put you two on display,” sobbed
Coping with Erectile Dysfunction, limply, from behind
The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.**

**“The problem isn’t him, it’s you,” declared the Oxford English Dictionary, with
meaning.**

**“You get too involved. With me, it’s just a quick in and out.
We have an understanding.”**

**“That’s all very well for you to say, pronounce, utter, articulate,”
muttered Roget’s Thesaurus, who always had some words
To add to the conversation.**

**Graham entered the room, carrying a box.
Dipping into it, he pulled out a slim, shiny metal object.
He stared at it all night, his interest kindled.**

The books sat silently on the shelf.

Contacts

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

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(Answerphone operates when the office is closed)

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Web : www.swindonu3a.org.uk

Charity Number 298853

Copy Dates

Items for the Newsletter must be received by the Editor
by the 18th of the preceding month

All contributions must be sent to the Editor using the Newsletter contributions e-mail address: newsletter@swindonu3a.org.uk The Editor reserves the right to amend or abbreviate any entries submitted