

MALVERN U3A NEWSLETTER

N° 82 SPRING 2017



“Join with me daily in refuting the notion that we live in an Ageing Society, as if it were some awful abnormal disaster. What could be more normal, more natural and more heartening than a society in which the great majority of people live a normal lifespan?”

**Eric Midwinter – From his address & U3A celebration
at the opening of its 1000th branch at Churchdown, Gloucester**

U3A Committee (Trustees)

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Cover photograph: 'Frosted Teasel' by Sue Kershaw

CHAIR'S NOTES

At the recent AGM the Trustees repeated their plea for more members to join our group who work to make sure that the U3A works well, that meetings are held, rooms booked, finances sorted and that we meet all our legal requirements. So far, no-one has expressed an interest!

I wonder why? There are a few thoughts I had on this:

If you've already done a stint as a Trustee (which is only an alternative word for a committee member) then you can relax, knowing that you have done your bit for this U3A. We're grateful for your past work, and won't expect more from you.

If you're not sure what being a Trustee entails – then you can come along to observe a meeting to see what happens, or you could ask any committee member about the role.

If you don't see yourself as "a committee person" – then you'd fit in very well: we're a very disparate group of varied individuals with varied backgrounds.

If you're worried about how much time it would take up, keeping you away from other hobbies and U3A interests, then you might want to know we meet just eight times a year for a two hour meeting. Of course there are some things to be done in between meetings, and some Trustees have taken on great responsibilities – but there is actually something very satisfying about being at the heart of such a large group as Malvern U3A and helping to make sure it works well.

We really do need people who are in the U3A not just for themselves but also for others, who want to put something back into the U3A. As our U3A has grown, to over one hundred groups and nearly 1500 members, an active and full group of Trustees is more important.

Although our constitution says we only have to have five Trustees, we ideally need a larger group to share the decision making. There are a number of specific roles which need to be filled, as well as people "without portfolio" who will contribute their ideas and energy to how our U3A works.

We specifically would like to find a Visiting Speakers' Organiser (so if you haven't been interested in the speakers that we have invited, then by all means step forward to find speakers whom you will find interesting) and someone as Assistant Membership secretary to help Robin Clarke with the membership

tasks. It'd be good to find someone who would enjoy organising social events such as the Quiz we had last year.

One aspect of our Constitution is that committee members are not allowed to be Trustees/Committee members for more than five years. (This is to stop the U3A being run by a perpetual clique!) The downside of this is that we need to have new blood from time to time, hence this plea to you all.

If we don't have new committee members coming forward to share the work, then, in the worst possible scenario, this U3A will not be able to continue. No more meetings, no shared interests, no new friends, and all our funds reverting to the national Third Age Trust. Please give this some thought, and contact any of the current Trustees if you are interested in finding out more.

Thank you for reading this!

Pam Stanier

From the trustees ...

Malvern U3A AGM – some information

At the November AGM three motions were put to the meeting by the Trustees. Two were passed: an additional section on our membership form setting out expectations of members; the other to raise the annual subscription to £14 from September 2017, on the recommendation of our Treasurer.

The third motion was to re-word section 2 of our constitution about the Objects of the U3A. This had been recommended to the Trustees by the Third Age Trust national office, so that all U3As have the same objects.

Although this was passed by a majority, the Trustees had overlooked section 10 of our constitution which says that certain clauses in our constitution may not be amended at all. The Trustees will consider the implications of this and consult the National office.

Speakers' Corner

Malvern U3A has received a 'thank-you' letter from Hannah Bradford on behalf of Help for Heroes thanking us for our donation of £371.19 following a talk at our monthly meeting by one of their members. Hannah explains that " at least 66,090 of the 757,805 people who served as Regulars in the British Armed Forces between 1991 and 2014 will need our support either now, or in the future".

Christmas Lunch

..... get your diaries out now!

Malvern U3A Christmas lunch last December was at The Worcestershire Golf Club and as usual I think they did us proud. They offer the traditional Turkey and all the trimmings but there is always fish and a vegetarian option so I hope everyone enjoyed it as much as I did. I cooked for 6 on Christmas day and can't imagine what cooking for 65 must be like! Sharon & Michael, the chefs at the club, are so obliging if there are different dietary requirements too. Thank-you to all those that contributed gifts for the raffle.

2017 is already booked for FRIDAY 15th DECEMBER. May I take this opportunity to wish you all a happy & healthy 2017.

Jenny Jackson

Information from National Office

"Take Five"

A senior Fraud Prevention Officer of the City of London Police has sent information to National Office about a new website that has been started. It gives information on how to protect ourselves against financial fraud – https://take_five-stop-fraud.org.uk

Oxford Film & Television

This Oscar & BAFTA award winning production company are making a documentary & want to speak to people who celebrated The Royal Wedding in 1947. If you were there – on The Mall, at a street party or outside Westminster Abbey etc,etc - and have a story to tell please contact them.

Tel: 020 7483 3637 or e-mail Natalie.woolman@oftv.co.uk

One Thousand U3As !

The 1000th U3A UK branch has just opened at Churchdown, Gloucester and now the U3A has accepted a challenge to have one million members by 2020. Growth has been at a rate of 22,000 new members annually for the past eight years and membership is expected to reach 500,000 by the end of 2017.

"We need to grab the challenge by the scruff of the neck and make a success of it. I am therefore proposing a four year plan". Eric Midwinter (Surviving co-founder)

Events

March 7,8,9th Caerlaverock Wetland Centre Dumfriesshire, *A Talk on the Wild Side*.

Day starts at 11am. £10 including welcome refreshments, illustrated talk and guided tour of the wildlife centre.

To book: visit www.wwt.org.uk/caerlaverock or email pam.mundv@wwt.org.uk
Tel: 01387 - 770200

- March 9th** National Gallery London *Dutch painting study day*
 11am-3.30pm £20
 Booking opens 3rd January - online via events in members' area
 www.u3a.org.uk or booking form from National Office.
- March 16th** Royal Institution. *Exploring science spring meeting*
 1.45-4.45pm. £21.50
 Details available later in January from national office and the U3A website
 members' area.
- March 27th** British Library *Mughal India art and culture*
 Explore the beautiful craftsmanship of manuscripts, paintings and architecture.
 11am - 4pm. £25
 To book: online via events in members' area
 www.u3a.org.uk or booking form from National Office.
- April 25th** Brandenburg Choral Festival of London, at Temple Church London EC4
 Step into Spring with Vivaldi's Gloria and other beauties! 2pm £18
 To book: online via events in members' area
 www.u3a.org.uk or booking form from National Office.

National Summer Schools 2017

Booking opens 23rd January. To have the summer school brochure e-mailed to you, join the events mailing list via the events page of u3a.org.uk or email evenis@u3a.org.uk

Alternatively, contact National office for a brochure by post.

- 17th-20th July **Harper Adams University**, Newport, Shropshire.
 Cryptic crosswords; France; Globalisation; History; Literature; Maths;
 Recorders; Sexuality in the ancient world.
- 14th -17th Aug. **Royal Agricultural University**, Cirencester.
 Creative writing; Garden history; Latin; Literature; Music; Poetry;
 Shakespeare; Singing.
- 11th-14th Sept. **Royal Agricultural University**, Cirencester
 Art history; Drama; Exploring English; History; Music; Opera;
 Russian Revolutions; Spanish; Writing.

Also ...

Brooklands Museum special talks for U3A groups

"Gear sticks & lipsticks" and *"VC10 & Her Royal Connections"* £15. Group size 20-40
 Leaflets from National office.

For further information or to book contact Virginia Smith 01932 - 857381
virginiasmith@brooklandsmuseum.com

News from Groups

Tuesday Garden Group – 2017 Programme

Group Leaders: Wendy Davies and Janet Jackson

Held on 1st Tuesday in the month

Meet at 1 Tibberton Road at 1.30pm unless earlier time listed.

- March 7th** **Visit to Home Farm, Huntley, Glos. GL19 3HQ**
Meet at 1.00pm. *Please note earlier time.*
Refreshments will be available at Fairview Garden Nursery nearby.
- April 4th** **Visit to Little Malvern Court, Little Malvern, WR14 4JN.**
Refreshments will be available at The Kettle Sings afterwards.
- May 2nd** **Visit to Pear Tree Cottage, Witton Hill, Wichenford, WR6 6YX**
Refreshments available.
- June 6th** **Visit to The Barton, Berrow Green, Martley, WR6 6PL**
Refreshments available.
- July 4th** **Visit to Hanley Swan Gardens.** (Park in Picken End)
We will be visiting Chasewood and 19 Winnington Gardens.
Refreshments will be at 19 Winnington Gardens, home of Brian & Irene Skeys.
Please find further information in NGS Book.
- August 1st** **Church Cottage, Hentland, Ross-on-Wye, HR9 6LP.**
Meet at 1.00pm. *Please note earlier time.*
Please park at Church, a short distance away from Church Cottage.
Refreshments will be available.
- September 5th** **Visit to The Picton Garden, Colwall, WR13 6QE.**
Refreshments will be available afterwards at the home of Suzanne Keen,
4 Brookmill Close, Colwall, WR13 6HY.
- October 3rd** **Planning Meeting at Gillian Ackland's house**
Time: 2.30 pm. Charge 50p.
Please bring a small plate of food and plenty of ideas for 2018!
We will also be having a plant swap.
- November 7th** **Visit to Bodenham Arboretum, Nr. Kidderminster, DY11 5TB**
Meet at 12 noon (*Please note early start as it gets dark early.*)
There is a wonderful restaurant for lunch!
If anyone wants to go all day, we could arrange to meet there.

Please telephone Wendy Davies (575996) or Janet Jackson (561902)
if you are either able or unable to attend.

Please bring ample money to cover cost of entrance, refreshments and petrol.

Geology Group



It's a quiet time of the year for outdoor activities in the geology group but some hardy souls are still carrying out useful work. One of our members, John Payne, in his role within the Earth Heritage Trust, organises works parties throughout the year to clear geologically interesting sites for both the AONB and the Conservators. This work mostly consists of clearing undergrowth in order to expose interesting rock features within the area for the benefit of visitors with a geology interest. The

volunteer workers come from geological groups within the area including the U3A. The latest session was at the Upper Wyche Quarry just above the Earnslaw Quarry. The exposure that was tackled is a good example of granite and granite like rocks with a fault plane running diagonally across the face in question. The exposure was difficult to see, hidden both by saplings growing in front of it as well as the ubiquitous moss on the face itself. The before and after photos show the fruits of the group's labours.



Understanding Ourselves

"Know thyself." The ancient Greeks were on to it, as were countless other philosophers down the ages. However, there's no need to visit Greece or any other mystical location for enlightenment, for thanks to the U3A mutual self-improvement ethos there's a homely setting in the Malvern Hills where the selfsame philosophical quest can be explored and mused upon.

And so it was on a recent November weekend that twelve Third Agers of an enquiring frame of mind were invited to experience a reflective, realistic and refreshingly jargon-free approach to how we think, feel and act as our authentic selves.

The strength of the model lies in its exposure to a gentler, more inclusive and compassionate perspective on being human. Personality types are regarded as equally similar and different, individual attributes viewed and experienced as gifts.

The course was supported by ample, thoughtfully produced material to be retained for reference and reflection.

Our thanks go to John and Elizabeth Staley for their generosity of time, commitment and hospitality.

Peter Downes

Welsh Culture Group

On Friday, October 21st 2016, the nation remembered the South Wales mining village of Aberfan.

Fifty years previously, on Friday October 21st 1966 at a few minutes past 9 o'clock in the morning, 150,000 tons of pit waste slid from Tip No 7. As it descended upon the village it inundated a farm, eighteen terraced houses and Pant Glas ("Green Hollow") Junior School.

144 lives ended in the space of two or three minutes, 28 of them were elderly people, housewives at home-some with young children and miners not working the morning shift.

The remaining 116 were school children 8 to 10 years old. They had just begun the last day before the following week's half-term holiday; their last school day.

Wales has seen many – too many – mining tragedies and in all of them the price of coal was paid for in miners' lives. But this one was different – the greater part of the cost was borne by children.

Malvern U3A Welsh Culture group marked the 50th anniversary of the disaster at its October meeting by presenting "A Remembrance of Aberfan" in music, images, poetry and prose.

At the beginning members listened to a recording of the Welsh harpist, Catrin Finch, playing "Silent Noon" by the composer Ralph Vaughan Williams. Two accounts of that appalling day, written by group members, were then read aloud, followed by the playing of a recording of the children of Pwllgwenly Junior School singing "We are Children Born to the Valleys".

After this introduction 12 members – 6 women, 6 men – read aloud extracts from "The Village that Lost Its Children" by the poet and writer Laurie Lee. In late autumn 1966, or soon after, he was commissioned to visit Aberfan and record his observations in writing for the magazine "The Redbrook". This he did, and the piece was published by Penguin books in 1967, and again in 1977, as part of his "I Can't Stay Long" collection of various items written down the years. It deserves wider recognition as a beautifully written tribute to Aberfan and its people.

Throughout the readings and musical interludes, images of Aberfan before, during and after the catastrophe, were shown at appropriate moments, perhaps the most powerful one being that of the school clock retrieved from the slurry with its hands stopped at 9.13.



The programme ended with the playing of a recording by Aled Jones of an exquisite Welsh lullaby "Suo Gan". As we listened, we watched a series of photographs taken on a bright summer day a few months previously, of the lovely and immaculately tended "Memorial Gardens" created on the site of Pant Glas School, and also the awesome monumental rows of graves where most of the children lie. The hillside cemetery overlooks a green and pleasant valley through which flows the River Taff on its way down to Cardiff.

No trace of any of the seven tips which once towered threateningly over Aberfan is to be seen. All of them were removed within a few years of the tragedy – a few years too late.

Malvern U3A Welsh Culture Group

Recorder Group

From our humble beginnings in November 2014 when six of us met at the Cube, we are now a thriving group with 24 on the register. Meeting twice a month on the first and third Thursday afternoons, we are an informal, friendly group, who just enjoy making music together.

The majority of us hadn't played recorder since primary school, whilst some were already quite experienced players.



Our group now also comprises players who came along as beginners. Through their own hard work, and the support of the group in the form of separate beginner's sessions, and one-to-one mentoring, they are now able to join in with the main group. Others in the group

have learned to play another type of recorder, and we had separate "lessons" to promote this.

We play a wide range of music and have bass, tenor, treble and descant players.

Recently we put together a varied performance for the Sight Concern group at their bi-monthly meeting held at Christ Church Hall in Great Malvern.



Our programme spanned the centuries, incorporating Renaissance music from the 1500s, through to the 1960s Lennon/McCartney piece "When I'm 64". It included Ragtime, Latin-American and some well known classical pieces - like Eine Kleine Nachtmusik and Bach's Air on a G-String.

The afternoon was very well attended, and well received. Afterwards we were served with a delicious high tea with sandwiches, cakes and biscuits and a very large pot of tea, all of which was much appreciated by us all. They said they'd like us to come back again, which we look forward to doing.

We're hoping to do more performances during the coming year, and are also very happy to welcome new members who can come along and have a go on our spare instruments. We can help non-music readers too.

If you're interested then please contact Annette
by email: nettm@mail.com
or by phone: 01684 - 566 208



Travel Group

All members of the Malvern U3A are automatically members of the travel Group.

Our meetings are held on the second Tuesday of every month, 2 to 4pm except January and August. The meetings are held at "The Cube", Albert Road north, Malvern WR14 2YH.

For those members who cannot attend our monthly meetings, you may still come on our trips. On our web page, click on the box marked TRIPS. All the trip details are listed with the name and contact details of the trip organiser. To organise going on a trip simply contact the appropriate Trip Organiser and go from there.

Payment for trips by cheque are made payable to: Malvern U3A Travel Group.

Forthcoming trips

Thursday 30th March

Trip to see The Severn Bore and to Gloucester Quays Outlet Shopping Centre

This will be an opportunity to see one of the best Severn Bores in the Spring at 10.28 am. We will then visit Gloucester Quays Outlet Mall.

Departing from Malvern Splash Car Park 08.15, also picking up from bus stop opposite Market Hall. Ledbury at 08.30

Return from Gloucester 1530 to 15.45.

Cost £14.00 per person to include coach and driver's tip

Trip Organiser: Margaret Flanagan Tel: 01684 - 566 650 Mobile: 07779 - 203 610

Wednesday 26th April

Madresfield Court Tour

Meet at Madresfield Court at 2.20 pm for a guided tour lasting 90 minutes. There are toilet facilities but no refreshments available. Please note there are a lot of steps and some standing on this tour.

Cost: £10.00 per person

Trip organiser: Pat Hague Tel: 01905 - 828 249

Wednesday 12th July

Trip to The Royal Mint, Llantrisant, near Cardiff and Cyfartha Castle, Merthyr Tydfil

There is a guided tour at the Royal Mint lasting 90 minutes, plus time for exhibition.

Cost of trip if 26 people go is £26.50 which includes £11.00 admission to the Royal Mint and £1.00 admission to Cyfartha Castle, coach and driver's tip.

Cost of trip if 43 people go is £23.00 per person which includes the same admission fees.

Depart from the Malvern Splash car park 08.30; Return from Merthyr Tydfil 16.30 hrs.

Trip Organiser: Pat Hague Tel: 01905 - 828 249

Cycling group

The U3A cycling group continues to expand its membership and programme of rides. Electric bikes are proving increasingly popular so that everyone is able to participate regardless of ride length or number of hills. Membership now exceeds the 50 mark and recent rides have attracted between 16 and 24 riders. We meet on the first and third Wednesdays of the month and rides tend to cover anything from 20 to 40 miles, terminating with the essential pub lunch. Next June we will be visiting the East Midlands on a 4 day 'tour'. This will be the fifth 'tour' and the first one to attract over 20 participants.



We already have ride leaders to see us through to next June. If the weather is fine this is an excellent way to explore the lanes and byways of the three counties.

Anyone wanting to join the cycling group can do so by e-mailing me your intention. Similarly do write to me if you need further information.

Roger Keeling

RogKeeling@gmail.com

Members of the cycling group on last summer's tour to the Gower.



Lawn Bowling Group (Summer season May to August 2017)

(Dates and starting times of the bowling sessions will be given in the online U3A Calendar.)



The Lawn Bowling Group will continue again during the summer season – using the outdoor facilities of the Malvern Priory Bowling Club, Orchard Road, Malvern. The emphasis is to introduce and enhance the bowling skills of U3A members through friendly and competitive games. Sessions (2hr) will take place on a Wednesday and/or Thursday afternoons each week from the beginning of May to the end of August, depending on the demand. Beginners and experienced bowlers are most welcome.

A qualified Coach will oversee each session. Bowling equipment can be provided, if needed. The dress code is informal – the only stipulation being that flat shoes/trainers, with soft soles, are worn.

Please register your interest through the contacts below.

Wayne Braddock (Phone: 01684 574025, e-mail: wayne.braddock@btinternet.com)

Dorothy Keeling (Phone: 01905 831542, e-mail: dorothyjkeeling@gmail.com)

Malvern U3A Tennis at BOUGHTON PARK LAWN TENNIS CLUB

During spring 2017 Boughton Park Lawn Tennis Club is going to be offering, on a trial basis, Tennis Coaching and Social Tennis, for Beginners and Improvers, to members of Malvern U3A

The cost will be £1 per session, plus £1 towards the cost of tennis balls.

Boughton Park Lawn Tennis Club has 4 Hard courts and 3 Grass courts and is located within Worcester Golf and Country Club, Bransford Road, Worcester WR2 4EZ

For more details and an invitation to view our facilities, please contact:

Malvern U3A member Jeff Thorogood (Member No 40355)

e.mail: jeffrey.thorogood@btinternet.com; i-pad: jeffthorogood@me.com

Text: 07429 - 610 155; Tel: 01886 832 764



Genealogy & Family History Group

Celebrating 21 years with leader Eugene Colwell.



Eugene founded the Genealogy & Family History Group in September 1995 with the first meeting taking place at the former Malvern Youth Centre, (Malvern Cube).

We have been lucky to have Eugene leading our group all of these years, guiding us with his wide knowledge of the publishing trade and his personal experience of research techniques. Although he is handing over his leadership to a new committee, we are glad to know that he still intends to come to meetings when able, as a regular member and friend, and of course, he will always be warmly welcomed! We would all like to thank him for his energy, enthusiasm and humour (and patience!) over the years.

The photograph shows a busy meeting of our Family History and Genealogy Group on Tuesday November 8th, at Malvern Baptist Church hall, when the theme was "Layouts and Displays". For this, we all brought in our files, albums or family-trees-in-progress, to share with others and it gave us a chance to exchange ideas, chat about our successes or "brick walls" and help one another, in what was a lively, interesting and informative meeting.



New members are always welcome. Phone Gwen Evans on 01684 - 491 564



Theatre Studies

22nd February Bernard Miles & The Mermaid Theatre - talk by Moira Miller.

29th March History of the Musical (part 1)

26th April Discussion on Theatre with Nic Lloyd.

Alan Starkey

Knitting & Crochet

Crochet

Our group of crochet beginners have learnt lots this term. We began with the basic stitches and working in rows, then made a phone cosy or a purse, and a scarf. Then they learned how to work in the round and made a coaster, a flower and a small bowl. They also learned how to follow charts and used them to make a granny square and a snowflake. Like the knitters we plan on a group project next term to make a blanket from crocheted squares.

Knitting

The Knitting and Crochet Group started in September, 2016. I take the Knitters and the Crocheters are in the capable hands of Sally Magill.

We meet in 'The Cube,' in the Art Room, on the second and fourth Monday afternoons with our two hour session divided into "Knit and Natter", projects and easy tutorials.

Knit and natter is usually over our tea break and our first project is to make a blanket of knitted squares decorated with leaves, which we hope to give away when completed.

The tutorials have so far, covered different methods of casting on, increasing and decreasing and buttonholes. We have produced small items such as flowers and pink mice to demonstrate these techniques.

We have space for more knitters and crocheters, so if you feel it is for you, please contact me.

Jeni Chesney
jenichesney57@yahoo.com



*The Knitting and Crochet group at work ...
... some of their work ...
... and their model!*





Examples of work from the Needlework Group



Images from Painting Group 2

Speakers for our Monthly Meeting - 2pm at The Cube

- 28th February **“An Autumn ride through the Rockies”** by Peter Berry
- 28th March **“A History of Fairy-tale and Folklore”** by Hesther Bate
- 25th April **“The most disreputable man in London”** by Gill White
- 30th May **“African Animal Encounters”** by Fran Sandham
- 27th June **“The Great Stink”** by Mike Hayes

Come along for inspiration, and a chat and a drink with friends old and new.

NEWSLETTER

We are always looking for contributions from groups or individual members for the Newsletters which are published in October, February and May.

All contributions should be e-mailed, (preferably as a Word document), to

newsletter@malvernu3a.org.uk

Photographs should be sent as .jpg files

Please note the deadline for the May edition is

Saturday 22nd April 2017