

MALVERN **U3A** NEWSLETTER

NO 74 MAY 2014



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Chairman's Chat

I must start by congratulating our very own Brian Chesney, who leads the Social History group, on not only reaching the final of Mastermind, but then only losing out to the eventual winner on number of passes. Anyone who goes to the Social History group will understand why Brian did so well.

(Read Brian's thoughts on entering Mastermind on page 16.)

Since our last Newsletter I have enjoyed visiting some of our inspiring groups and meeting more of our members. The enthusiasm generated by Group Leaders and those attending meetings is clear to see; from those who have been involved for years, to new leaders and members. Having experienced the delights of short mat bowling - the jack may be nearer than outside, but they put a short barrier half way down the mat to make it more difficult!, I went on to Boules, - watch out for the slopes, and pedestrians, then Social History with Brian's adoring 'Chesneyettes'. Having met the other ukulele group, I'm now looking forward to hearing the speaker at the Welsh Culture group and getting some culture at Music, Poetry and Prose.

If I don't meet you at one of our groups then I look forward to seeing you at the monthly general meeting. Sue Lamberton has been getting some cracking speakers, and with a free drink, biscuit and chat it's a great afternoon out!

As a U3A we are members of two further groups which aim to share ideas and expertise across a number of U3As. These are the Cotswold Link and the Worcestershire Group. Two recent initiatives that have come from these meetings are to put a list of all interest groups offered across the Cotswold Link area on the Link website, and for Worcestershire groups with similar interests to share speakers. The list of all groups on the website could get you thinking about new groups that you would like to see offered in Malvern, and a first move might be to talk to the leader from another U3A about the subject you are interested in. They may be able to put you on the right track to setting up our own group. Sharing speakers could help take the load off some group leaders with 'ready made' presentations offered from other U3A leaders/speakers. What do you think? Are these useful initiatives? I would like to be able to report back at future Link and County group meetings as to our feelings.

Richard

Newsletter Editor: newsletter@malvernu3a.org.uk

Cover image by Rosemary Fretwell

News from groups

Understanding Ourselves

Understanding Ourselves is a weekend workshop organised by John & Elizabeth Staley which is centred on the Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) developed by Katherine Briggs and her daughter Isabel Myers, the objective being to identify an individual's personality, their strengths and preferences.

It is an excellent instrument by which individuals can gain knowledge of their own personality. John & Elizabeth introduce the event by explaining the process and then request participants to complete a questionnaire which requires you to answer questions on various life situations. Upon completion, this will indicate where you fit into the 16 personality types defined in the MBTI. It is of the utmost importance to understand that there is NO PERSONALITY TYPE WHICH IS BETTER THAN ANOTHER, it is simply a tool to learn more about yourself, which will hopefully improve your life through self-knowledge. It also gives you a better understanding of people in general, family, friends, acquaintances, colleagues.

My husband and myself really enjoyed this weekend, and although we have been married for 35 years with the usual ups and downs, have gained a better understanding of our relationship. For example:- (husband's edit) "I now understand why she speaks so much... (wife's edit) "I now understand why he has a symbiotic relationship with his iPad..."

We had a wonderful group of thirteen U3A members and during the weekend had stimulating discussions on varying life situations.

The course is held at John & Elizabeth's home in the centre of Great Malvern. It was a cold February weekend and the group were all seated in a bright spacious sitting room with comfortable seating around a lovely log fire.

There was a very small charge for the weekend, £7.00 per person (great value for money) for U3A and for a good number of information handouts to enable us to keep and re-evaluate what we have learnt over the weekend.

In conclusion, I know John & Elizabeth are a modest couple and shy away from praise but it has to be said that if you are the type of person who appreciates this type of self-discovery in a relaxed friendly atmosphere then this is a wonderful way to spend a stimulating enjoyable weekend.

Jim & I would like to give our great thanks to John & Elizabeth and also our fellow participants.

Joan Murphy, March, 2014.

The Discussion Group

During the last twelve months we have been enthralled by a cornucopia of ideas and facts (at least some of us think so)!

We have considered and discussed the importance of the outcome for the world by Oliver Cromwell's victory at the Battle of Worcester as related to us by Howard Robinson. Other discussion subjects have been: The Hospice Movement (Rev Carl Attwood), Genealogy (Frank Townsend), Background to Charles Darwin (Dr Chris Flower), Nutritional Empowerment (Dr Geoff Douglas), Relations with Russia between the two wars (Dr Gerald Brooke), The Church Movement in England (Rev Peter Edwards), Stem Cell Research (Dr June Jones of radio fame) and Verdi; "Hurdy Gurdy" Early Verdi (Brian Meadows).

The venue is The Friends Meeting House, Orchard Road, times 2.00pm to 4.00pm (sharp) on the third Monday in the month (NOT December or August).

Do come along to share in the ideas, chocolate biscuits, coffee and comfy chairs. This September we welcomed Harriet Baldwin MP followed by Georgina Davenport and Nick Wilkes of Malvern Theatres, plus Robert Dance from Morgan Cars complete with brand new Morgan sports car.

Ian MacGregor (Leader) 01684 - 899 061



*Robert Dance, Ian MacGregor and Martin Peer
with the Morgan*

French Conversation 3

This Group has been going for just over six years, and comprises fourteen members, meeting on the first and third Monday mornings of the month from 10 am to 12 midday at the Leader's house.

We like to talk informally and some people like to prepare some vocabulary sometimes. It is a very diverse and interesting group which is fully subscribed to.

We don't have any particular plans for the future, except to enjoy speaking together in French!

We don't study any books etc, but some people regularly subscribe to magazines and lend them around the Group.

Jill Rayner.

Music Appreciation (Classical)

Leaders Peter & Charlotte Hurcomb 01684 - 891 482

This group is now in its 10th year and still going strong. We meet at 10 am on the first Wednesday of each month from October to May. Some of our members take a turn to host a meeting. There is no cap on membership as we operate a booking system.

We also run an OPERA GROUP, now in its 6th year, under the banner of Ledbury & District U3A to which Malvern members are always welcome. All operas are shown at the home of Peter & Charlotte Hurcomb in Upper Welland on the 3rd Wednesday, starting at 10 am. Again, a booking system is used and new members are always welcome and our season is from October to May. Operas are shown on a large TV screen with sound through a Hi-Fi system. Many of the operas are taken from transmissions as shown in local cinemas from The Metropolitan Opera, Australian Opera, Glyndebourne and The Royal Opera House London.

It's Croquet Time!

We are looking forward to starting the new season of our wonderful game at Millers Court Farm on Thursday 1 May 2014 if the weather is kind and the court in playable condition. As before we will have four courts in play and our kick off will be at 10am.

We will consult our host nearer the date to confirm the arrangement and in the event of poor conditions we will try to contact everyone in time to prevent a wasted trip. Certainly we couldn't have asked for better spring weather to help bring the courts to condition!

As in other years on Wednesday 30 April from 10am members who have the time are encouraged to join us at Millers Court along with members of the Friday Group to help prepare the club house and equipment.

We have had a contact from Broadwas Croquet Club who are inviting players to a "tasting" day at their club. If members are interested in this we can discuss it when the season starts and make some arrangements. It has also been suggested by one of our own members that we could consider some form of tournament between the clubs and this is also up for discussion perhaps over lunch on the lawn it seems so long since we last did that, but not long to wait now!



Regards to all, Ken

Theatre Studies

28 May Helen Mirren talk by Alan Starkey

Our subjects for the following months are still to be decided. We will give details on monthly updates or contact Group Leader direct.

Alan Starkey

Duplicate Bridge - a request

Do you have a bridge table that you no longer need? The flourishing Duplicate Bridge group would gladly take it off your hands so that more members can take part.

If you can help please contact Andrew Hague.

Ukulele Groups

On April 8th the two Ukulele Groups met up for a concert at Manor Park. (No outside audience for this one - just mutual support from the group members.)

The designation of the groups so far has been 'Beginners' and 'Intermediate' and it was clear from the off that the Beginners will have to come up with a new name: they were great with their amazing renditions of a wide range of songs. Great playing, and great singing. The 'Intermediates' knew they needed to pull out all the stops to compete! They couldn't match the singing (apart from on the George Formby), but lightning fingers on the tunes made up for that.

The two groups came together to play the blues (although the session was anything but blue), as well as Derek's arrangement of Pachelbel's Canon.

Thanks must go to the ever patient Derek Measure who leads these merry bands, and who arranges the music for us.



Strollers - Calendar of walks

We meet on the second Monday of each month at 10.15am to pre-order lunch and set off at 10.30am. Walks are approximately 3 miles long and we try to avoid stiles and hills.

We do hope members participate in organising walks for the future.

Contact Ann Martin on 01684 563833 or

Pat Hague on 01905 828249 or e-mail andrwhg@aol.com for any information.

Monday 9th June

Leader: Pat Hague

Tel; 01905 - 828 249

Walk from the pub along The River Severn toward Severn Stoke.

Meet at 10.15am at The Talbot pub car park, Kempsey. (On the A38)

Lunch at The Talbot.

Monday 14th July

Leader: Malcolm Williams

Tel; 01905 - 319 158 Mob. 07854 - 077 670

Walk around the back ways and along the river at Evesham.

Meet at Raphael's Restaurant (WR11 4BP) at Hampton Ferry at the very end of Boat Lane down by the river. (The last part is almost a track - ignore the £2 parking sign.)

Lunch at the restaurant - pub-style meal.

No walk in August

Monday 8th September

Leader Ann Martin

Tel: 01684 563833

Meet at 10.15am at St. Wulstan's Nature Reserve, Malvern, parking in car park and on roadside.

Monday 13th October

Leader: Dawn Trevou

Tel: 01684 577916

Details of walk: To be advised.



Kate Jefferies

Geology field trip to Las Palma

La Palma – la isla bonita

You know, of course, the pleasures of air travel, the relaxed drive to the airport; the cheerful check in staff; the friendly security people; the two minute walk to the aircraft where you are welcomed aboard and seated in a comfortable and spacious seat. No? Well perhaps we can dream!

Our outward journey began with the rather too insistent alarm at 2.30 am and finished a little over twelve hours later on the small and charming, westerly edge of the Canary islands.

We geologists know that there is lots of evidence of a volcanic past all over the UK, but due to millions of years of erosion, trying to find actual volcanoes is nye on impossible, so we came to this island, which is composed of nothing else. It is quite small, but is also rugged and extremely steep. The central north is dominated by the magnificent crater at the heart of the Taburiente volcano, whilst to the south is the active volcanic ridge known as Cumbre Vieja. The north and east of the island are quite thickly forested, whilst the south and west are bare black rock and often quite bleak. So quite a contrast. This going to be a difficult article to write, as I suspect that I shall soon run out of superlatives, but here goes.

Our base was a hotel just to the south of the island's capital Santa Cruz.

A remarkable collection of multi-coloured buildings, some dating back to the 16th Century. Since this is a small island, we managed to cover much of it in our week's stay. For the first three days we centred our exploration around the spectacular Taburiente crater. After looking at a huge scarred landscape where 3 000 000 000 000 tons of rock collapsed into the Atlantic creating giant tsunami waves, we walked along a deeply incised valley into the ancient volcanic core of the island, small cries of delight accompanying each discovery. This was the text book brought vividly to life.



Cumbrecita National Park



Las Palma panoramas - Geoffrey Carver

Day two saw us visiting the National Park at Cumbreceita where the brilliant sunshine revealed a beautiful panorama of fragrant pine trees and a different sequence of younger volcanic rocks, although younger here probably means about 750 000 years old. Even we geologists were impressed by the gentle ambience of this beautiful place. The two hours allocated to us by the Park Authority passed far too quickly.

At just over 2400 metres high, La Palma is not only steep but quite difficult to get around. With over 200 bends to negotiate, it is quite a slow journey to the very top. The Canarian houses gradually become more spaced out as the forest thickens and then we ascend into cloud and rain. After just a few minutes, the



Inside the world's largest telescope

greyness thins and we burst through into the clear spectral blue sky with views of over a hundred kilometres. The dazzling white cloud tops contrasting sharply with black, orange and red rocks. But that is only the backdrop to the Isaac Newton group of telescopes that we were to visit. The largest optical telescope in the world, coupled with one called MAGIC kept us fascinated by their complexity and their scientific capability. Eating lunch on such a fabulous viewpoint was no disappointment either.

At about 4 million years the oldest La Palman rocks are comparatively young, but two of the sites we visited featured rocks that were younger than our party, having been



erupted in 1949 and 1971. The former lavas were very fluid and as they ran down the mountain into the sea they formed tubes which we explored with local guides. This rugged troglodyte world was not to everyone's taste, but did show some of this island's remarkable variety.

Teneguia volcano erupted with relatively little warning and for less than a month, but produced a remarkably large amount of lava. Two people were killed by the eruption – both being asphyxiated by the gases driving the spectacular lava fountains. So it was only to be expected that our leader would set us the task of finding the fumeroles from which these same toxic gases still arise!



Volcan Teneguia – just a youngster at 43

On our final visit it seemed fairly natural to spend a little time looking at the archaeology of the island to understand how the pre-Spanish Guancha people used the island's natural resources to their advantage. The caves at Balmaco showed how skilfully they managed, and also that they had an artistic temperament as well.

Our first overseas field trip has certainly wetted our appetite for more.

Gardening Groups - 2014 Programmes

Monday Group

Held on 3rd Monday in the month

19th May	Stockton Bury, Kimbolton
16th June	Bourton House Garden, Ashton under Hill
21st July	Wolferlow House, Upper Sapey
18th August	Weston Mews, Weston under Penyard
15th September	The Tynings, Stoulton
20th October	Lower Hope, Ullingswick

Contacts Janet Green - 01684 567974; Pam Baker 01886 832983

From a personal point of view ...

Alcohol and the over 65s

from Dr. Mary Stewart PhD

To follow on from the article, "The third age tippie", page 29 in the Spring 2013 issue, [of *Third Age Matters*], there are a number of issues that can give us pause for thought, starting with the greater amount of free time we have in retirement to spend more time in the pub or club indulging in drink. As we have no more restrictions performance-wise, we may forget to observe "recommended drink limits" and find we are behind the wheel of the car when we shouldn't be.

While alcohol may be a legal substance, it is an addictive, depressive drug. Taking it in a number of circumstances can have adverse effect.

When we are alone, through the breakup of a marriage or death of a partner, we might feel isolated, depressed, and sorry for ourselves. We might think that an extra glass of sherry would be comforting, little realising that we might be letting ourselves in for a serious problem. We could get tipsy, fall over, pass out, and not be found for hours – even days.

Or, we may be taking a number of medications for either chronic or age-related conditions. Some of drugs can react unfavourably – even dangerously – with alcohol. And while use of alcohol might be cautioned on the medication instructions, there isn't a label on the liquor bottle or can that says, "don't drink this if you are also taking ..."

Injury or illness resulting from a combination of these drugs could get us into hospital – A&E or for longer stays. But chances are, our problem, be it a broken bone, a bump on the head, or a nasty cut, will be treated, while the cause will not. Even patients whose records might state the problem as "alcohol-related," will not be treated for this.

Incidentally, if alcohol isn't taken to begin with, there may be an injury or an illness that requires hospitalisation – but it won't be "alcohol-related". Occasionally, a doctor might advise an elderly patient to cut down his/her drinking, to observe recommended limits. But would a doctor dare suggest that if a patient is on a medication that reacts with alcohol, he/she not drink at all? It is doubtful.

U3A exists to enable pensioners with lots of time on their hands to occupy it and with like-minded people: what better help and support than enjoying alcohol-free twilight years? If walks, trips and outings ended in a cup of coffee or tea and a biscuit rather than a pint (or more) at the pub, and if discussion groups were encouraged to bring into the open problems with loneliness, resentment and self-pity that individuals might have, U3A groups might see a reduction in alcohol-related hospitalisation among their membership.

U3As could even start Addiction Discussion Groups where members can learn about how addictive drugs (legal, illegal, prescribed by doctors) affect and change the neurocircuits of the brain, interact with other drugs, long before the liver fails. They might investigate possible ties between drinking and dementia.

Indeed, U3As might also be carrying a much-needed message to the rest of the population regarding alcoholic beverages: they are not necessary to health and well-being, provide no nutritional or other life-enhancing value.

Who knows? U3A members might go a long way in convincing a nation that a sober life is neither dull nor boring, and offers the opportunity to realise one's full potential from teenage years to retirement and well beyond.

It's certainly worth trying!

Gardening Groups - 2014 Programmes

Tuesday Group

Held on 1st Tuesday in the month

Group Leader: Cynthia Wolfendale

Contacts: Wendy Davies (575 996) and Janet Jackson (561 902)

June 3 Visit to Phelps Cottage, Coddington, Ledbury, HR8 1JH
Meet at 1 Tibberton Road at 1.30 pm
Admission: £5 including refreshments

July 1 Visit to Conderton Manor, Nr. Tewkesbury, GL20 7PR
Meet at 1 Tibberton Road at 1 pm
Admission: £5.50 including refreshments

August 5 Visit to 5 Beckett Drive, Northwick, Worcester, WR3 7BZ
Meet at 1 Tibberton Road at 1.30 pm
Admission: £5.50 including refreshments

September 2 Visit to The Tynings, Church Lane, Stoulton, Nr. Worcester, WR7 4RE
Meet at 1 Tibberton Road at 1 pm
Admission £4 including refreshments

October 7 Visit to Longacre, Evendine Lane, Colwall, WR13 6DT
Meet at 1 Tibberton Road at 1 pm
After our visit, we will have refreshments at The Kettle Sings

November 3 Planning Meeting at Cynthia's
Time: 2.30 pm at 1 Tibberton Road Charge £1
Please bring a small plate of food and plenty of ideas for 2015.

PLEASE LET WENDY OR JANET KNOW IF YOU NO LONGER WISH TO BE A MEMBER

Geology Group

Our 9 weekly lecture course on the geological and archeological aspects of the British landscape was very well presented by Richard Edwards. He then went on to lead 3 separate coach trips which introduced members to the Herefordshire and Shropshire geological landscapes and concluded with a guided visit around the Roman city remains at Wroxeter. We are now hoping to continue this combined discipline approach in a small study group.

Another first for the group was our recent visit abroad when 30 members went to La Palma. Geoffrey Carver was our fieldtrip guide for the week and all went very well including a visit inside a lava tunnel. Other locations now beckon!

A group of 20 members have just finished 6 sessions looking at what fossils are and what they can tell us about the earth's evolutionary history. They now intend to pursue this interest in a variety of hands on ways.

Meanwhile our outdoor programme is well under way with walks and visits culminating in a 4 day visit to South Devon in the autumn.

New members are always welcome and we again anticipate putting on our 6 session introduction to geology next autumn – see you then?



Joan Smith

Photographs by members of the Camera Group
(3rd Friday, 10am at Manor Park)
March theme was 'Triptych'

Adventures in 'Mastermind'

Why don't you try for Mastermind said Jeni, instead of shouting out the answers? All right I said, I will. But what can I take as a special subject? Why don't you take Catherine the Great she said, handing me her biography. I read it. Wow. What a woman! I'll do it. I began filling in the online application form, and discovered I had to suggest four subjects, and give details of all the books I'd be using as research. Oh well, it's too late to back out now. I sent off the form, forgot all about it, and then out of the blue was rung up by a lady from the BBC. We'd like to give you an online audition she said. What, now? Yes. She asked me twelve general knowledge questions, and I got nine right. Then I had a call from the producer. We'd like you to come to Birmingham for another audition. This time I was asked twenty questions, and they started criticizing my special subjects. You can't do this

one, it's been done, it's too similar to someone else's etc. Eventually it was all settled, and it was next stop Salford. Jeni and I had sat in the audience before, so we knew roughly what to expect – the warm up comedian who entertains the audience beforehand, the banter between him and John Humphreys, all the stopping and starting and retakes that the TV viewers never see. Soon it was my turn to sit in the black chair. How nervy is that? Not nervy at all! You're in darkness, not conscious of the cameras around you, all you can see is John Humphreys' face. You just have to concentrate and give the right answer to all the questions – er well, that's the difficult part!



"I've started, so I'll finish..."

or

"As I was saying to John Humphreys..."

GET AWAY WITH U3A

Malvern U3A Travel Group activities for June to 2015!

Malvern Concert Club

Tuesday 26th June 2014 at 7.30pm

Leader: Simon Painton

Cost: £36.00 per person approx.

Contact Simon on 01684 - 575 066 if interested.

2015 Trip to America

Leaders: Lis Dobbs-Sandi and Alan Gray

News to be announced in May this year.

Itinerary includes: The Mid -West, Utah, Colorado, Arizona and New

Kelmscott Manor

(Grade 1 listed house and garden, William Morris' home)

Thursday July 3rd

Leader: Dawn Trevou

Phone: 01684 - 577 916

Cost: £26.10 per person.

Take picnic lunch or restaurant on site. Depart Splash 8:30 am

Black and White Village Trail, Herefordshire

Wednesday September 17th

Leader: Mary Smart

Tel: 01684 - 572 407

Brian Draper leads a guided tour looking at architectural and social usage of the times.

Restricted to only 30 people, Total cost £20.00 per person.

Military History Trip to Portsmouth Historic Dockyard

Thursday 2nd / Friday 3rd October

Leader: Alan Gray (Travel Organisation is with Easy Travel)

Price is approx. £100.00 per person for coach, admission fee and Bed & Breakfast and evening meal for one night.

Please contact Alan Gray if interested on 01684- 572 450 or e-mail: alanjohngray@gmail.com.

Riverdance '20th Anniversary Show'

at The Bristol Hippodrome

Sunday 5th October 2014

Leader: Lis Dobbs-Sandi

Tel: 01531-579052

e-mail: higharcturus@yahoo.co.uk

Depart; Malvern Splash 11am, this gives time for lunch

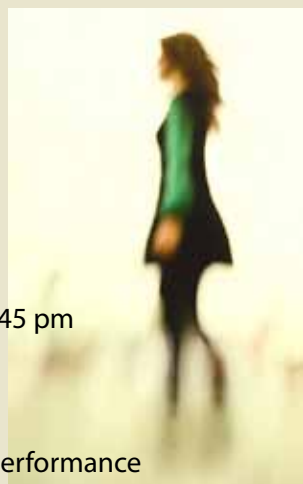
Performance: 2.30 pm

Return from Bristol; 5.00 pm Arrive Malvern approx. 6.45 pm

Cost: £45

ONLY A FEW TICKETS LEFT

Cost of coach only: £11.00 for those not going to the performance



After a hard day appreciating gardens the Tuesday group really appreciate tea and cakes.

Photograph: Elizabeth Wilkins

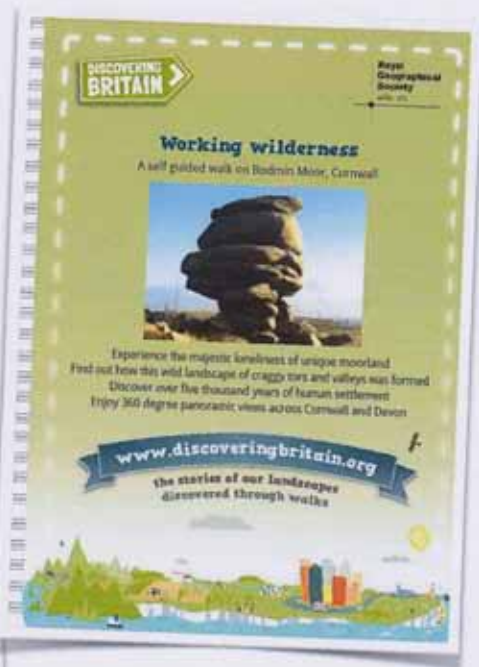
Speakers for our Monthly Meeting - 2pm at The Cube

- 27th May. The speaker is (our very own) **Roger Smith** on "**Peaks of Achievement**".
- 24th Jun. The speaker is **Cameron Adicott** who will talk about "**Fighting the Drugs War**".
- 29th Jul. The speaker is **Fran Sandham** who will tell us about "**Stanley and Livingstone**".

U3A Walking Guides

The Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) has just published the first two walk guides created by U3A members as part of the Discovering Britain Design a Walk competition. Order your copy of the attractive 40+ page colour booklet.

Price:
£3.75
inc. P&P



Complete and send **with your cheque** (payable to The Third Age Trust) to the National Office:

19 East Street, Bromley, BR1 1QE

I wish to order the following U3A Walking Guides, **enclosing a cheque for £**____:

Settle: ____ **copies** and/or **Bodmin Moor:** ____ **copies**

Name

U3A

Address

POST CODE

Telephone



Lorna Blackwell - Elan Valley

NEWSLETTER

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

All contributions should be e-mailed as a **Word document** to
newsletter@malvernu3a.org.uk

These should be typed or printed for clarity.

Photographs should be sent as .jpg files

Updates for the monthly supplements

should be sent to Richard Owen

supplement@malvernu3a.org.uk

Please note the deadline for the October edition is

Saturday 20th September 2014