

MALVERN **U3A**

Nº 81 AUTUMN 2016 NEWSLETTER



AGM
Tuesday 29th November at 2pm
'The Cube', Albert Road North

U3A Committee (Trustees)

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Cover photograph: Marie McCurry - End of the day

Chair's Notes

The Groups' Fair which starts our U3A year was a great success thanks to the particular efforts of our retiring Groups Organiser Val Holland and the new incumbent, Annette Maxted; Peter Corfield who set up the technology; Robin Clarke who organised the membership payments and cards, as well as all the other Trustees and others who helped out, and the group leaders who recruited for their groups. Thanks are due to everybody for organising such an important day in our year. I hope you all enjoyed meeting up with old friends, re-joining your groups and perhaps finding new interests.

These meetings only happen, of course, because we have a body of people who want to put something back into the U3A, not only in their own interest groups but on a wider scale. The meetings we hold only happen because someone has planned them, found and booked rooms, organised the essential coffee and biscuits, found the equipment needed, collected the funds and made sure we are working within the framework of our own constitution and the U3A legal framework. The people who have overall responsibility are the Trustees, who meet eight times a year to oversee such matters, and we will be seeking new trustees at the AGM: our secretary is retiring, I shall only have one more year as Chair and there will be vacancies on the committee of Trustees. This is the ideal way to help the U3A and use all our members' varied skills to make things better for everyone. Please think about this and don't ignore the papers about the Annual General Meeting when you get them!

The AGM in itself is one way in which all members have the chance to get together – the others being the monthly Visiting Speaker meeting and the Christmas lunch – and of course members will meet a cross-section of all the other members in their regular groups. Membership in itself brings obligations as well as privileges: some U3As have "terms and conditions of membership" on their application form, which they ask all members to sign up to as a condition of being a member, as indeed is recommended by the U3A National office, and the Trustees will be making recommendations about this to the AGM.

I have been giving this some thought, and what these terms of membership might be. First might be that the U3A is open to all who wish to join, no matter what their educational background, gender, race, religion and so on – and that all members should respect this in their dealing with each other. We might ask for an active commitment to come along to meetings, and not be an absent member. We might have something that suggests we don't want groups to become private clubs which don't accept new members. You may wish to consider and debate what you think of these. Any comments on this will be received with much interest!

I hope you all have an interesting term and that I shall meet up with many of you at Visiting Speaker meetings or the AGM.

Pam Stanier.

News from Groups

Memories of Mo Brown

By her U3A Creative Writing Group

It was Autumn 2012 when Mo first started a Creative Writing group. She enjoyed writing and wanted to meet with other like-minded people. She made it clear from the start that she made no claims to be an expert and soon collected a group of people who liked her light touch. Some were very experienced writers. One writer who joined about a year ago has just signed a contract to have his book published. There were also writers who had never before done any creative writing. One such member had spent his career writing technical articles, and the nearest he had come to creative writing were the press releases that he wrote.

Needless to say we have had many laughs, especially when the stories have been based on the real life experiences of our members. For example, the one where the character in the story who, at a company conference, found himself in the corridor outside his hotel room wearing no clothes!

Two of our members, whilst continuing to attend Mo's monthly meetings, started up groups of their own so that we now have three U3A Creative Writing groups – giving a choice of times and venues.

Mo was a prolific writer. As a Methodist Local preacher she wrote sermons and also wrote hymns. Mo wrote short stories and poems. The sermons would be written on paper in long hand, as she said this helped her to think; but the rest were expertly tapped out on her iPad, which also served to help her keep in touch with us all by e-mail.

Mo was a great inspiration to us all. She would have a positive word about every piece of writing, and a word of encouragement for those who needed a boost. She greeted each of us with open arms, a ready smile and a cheery welcome, even when she herself was not feeling too well.

We shall certainly miss those get-togethers in her flat, which leave many happy memories.

That particular day in the month was always one to look forward to.

Mo has left a lasting legacy of good humour, shared literary pleasures and gentle, discreet hospitality.

She was a lovely person, and courageous as well to have kept going despite sad circumstances.

It is hard to think of her not being with us any more.

We were fortunate to be part of Mo's group. We will all miss her.

Archaeology Group

The Archaeology group has reconvened for the new season with a very successful meeting at which members gave short talks about sites and places they had recently visited, ranging from Worcestershire via south Wales, the Canaries and Turkey to Sri Lanka, all with an archaeological interest. It is very encouraging to reflect that our members themselves have a huge reservoir of experience and observation to contribute to our deliberations. Most of our talks this year will in fact be given by members, with a couple of outside speakers to complete the bill of fare.

Since our last lecture in March we have undertaken a couple of excursions, to the Roman fort and settlement at Caerleon in South Wales, and to look at the park and WWII RAF site at Croome.



Roman fort and settlement at Caerleon

Our meetings are at 10.00 am on the third Wednesday of the month (except December, when it will be on the first), in the Victoria Park Bowling Club, Malvern Link.



Croome Park

On 19th October our member, Dave Mann, will be talking about Schliemann's excavations at Mycenae; on 16th November I will attempt an introduction to the archaeological study of pottery; and on 7th December another member, Alan Smith, will talk about population growth in prehistory.

We are happy to welcome new members.

Bob Ruffle

07866 - 703100

bob.ruffle@tesco.net



Croome under wraps.

Join the Travel Group on November 25th to find out about the history of Red Wing.

Botany

The newly formed Botany Group has now had two indoor meetings, including an enjoyable if intense practical session on hand lenses looking for distinguishing features of flowering plants. Nineteen of the nearly thirty interested peoples met on both occasions.

We have also had our first field visit with a select group of nine attending. We had a very enjoyable walk down the Purlieu and through Park Wood with a few of us ending the day with a close look at the tiny Spring ephemeral plants on the Malvern Hills ridge including the rather scarce *Teesdalia nudicaulis*.

There is still room for a few more interested people, no great depth of botanical knowledge is required just a willingness to learn.

Gerry Davies, Group Leader: gerrymiah31@gmail.com



The Botany Stand at the Groups Fair

Photo: Ruairidh Macdonald

Welsh Culture Group

National Eisteddfod of Wales – Abergavenny - August 2016

The Malvern U3A Welsh Culture group visited the National Eisteddfod at Abergavenny on Friday, 5th August, the day of the Charing of the Bard. The Eisteddfod was last held there in 1903 so this was an opportunity not to be missed.

Forty-seven of us left Malvern very early and arrived at Abergavenny just as the Festival Site was opening. Most of us had never attended the National Eisteddfod before and were unsure of what to expect. Around the perimeter of the Maes (field) were tents dispensing information about Welsh life (including a U3A tent), different charities and many offering every type of retail opportunity. The main Pavilion was in the centre of the Maes with secondary performance venues nearby.

The Pavilion was a new prefabricated structure with a large stage and thousands of tiered seats. This replaced the usual marquee and was deemed to be a great success, especially with the improved acoustics.

We had previously reserved a group of tickets for the Pavilion in an excellent position in front of the stage, and the seats were ours for the day, so that we were free to choose what we wanted to watch.

Most members spent some time watching folk dancing, opera singing and group recitation during the morning, having previously equipped themselves with instant translation equipment as the proceedings are naturally all in Welsh. After lunch in the designated food village everyone came together for the Charing of the Bard, the highlight of the Eisteddfod, in the late afternoon.



The ceremony started with the Druids being led on to the stage by trumpeters and dancing flowergirls. Those in white robes are winners of Eisteddfod prizes, the ones in green specialise in the arts, and the blue robes are for people who have made a contribution to their community or the nation. When they were all seated Archdruid Geraint

Owen invited the judges to tell the audience about the entries for the poetry prize that had been submitted, before announcing the winner to be Aneirin Karadog from Pontyberem. The lights were dimmed and the spotlight scanned the audience before arriving at Aneirin who was then led from his seat on to the stage where he was installed with due ceremony which included the famous question to the audience "A oes heddwch?" ("Is there peace?") to which we all replied "Heddwch!"

The bardic chair had been presented to the Eisteddfod by the family of Dic Jones, the winner of the prize at Aberafan fifty years ago. It is of a plain design with a high back, made of dark oak and will now be the personal property of Aneirin Karadog. He was then presented with wine from a horn and flowers from the people of Monmouthshire. The Charing Ceremony concluded with the Eisteddfod prayer and song and, of course, the Welsh National Anthem.



It was a tremendous day out in glorious weather in the beautiful setting of Abergavenny. Our thanks are due to Sandy Williams for organising the event.

Sue Price

Military History

Well organised by Malcolm Delingpole, a group of 25 people from the U3A had a very informative and comprehensive trip to Normandy to view the D-Day landing beaches, Pegasus Bridge, The Merville Battery, The Point du Hoc and other places of great interest, all the scenes of heavy fighting in the battle for Normandy in WW II.. We also followed in the footsteps of Stan Hollis, the only man to win the VC on D-Day.



The group at a bunker on Omaha beach

Based in Port en Bessin on the coast we also travelled inland to Falaise, birth place of William the Conqueror ,and where a huge number of Germans were either killed or captured when the Allies finally broke out and encircled them, Bayeux was also a place of great interest with its Cathedral and famous Tapestry. We also visited several cemeteries including the American one overlooking Omaha beach the final resting place, side by side, of the Niland brothers, the inspiration for the film Saving Private Ryan.

All the Military talks were conducted by Alan Gray and Mark Tovey and a great deal of thanks must go to them for all their hard work and research for giving us all such an in-depth account of the battle for Normandy.



Malvern U3A re-enacting the taking of German prisoners with the original photo at the Falais Gap.



Photos by Don Handy



Painting 2

We have had a great start to the new term with four new members joining us today, and more on the way. We had an enjoyable afternoon with new members getting to know the group, and settling down to do some very good work. Welcome to them, and of course to our long stay members of the group!

Val Bruton



Silk Painting

The Silk Painting Group would like to welcome this year's Freshers who might be wondering how it works and what they will be doing. If you've never had the joy of working with silk before, it's a case of baby steps and patience until you are more confident. You'll work at your own speed. One of our long-standing members will act as your mentor and take you under her wing.

You will be started off with being lent an embroidery oval and given a smallish piece of silk. You get to choose a design from our design books and you'll copy it onto your silk. (If you are naturally artistic you're welcome to do your own free-hand designs.)

You will then use gutta to outline your drawing and let it dry. While it is drying you should plan your colours, and for the first couple of lessons you will be lent the Group's small supply of group-paints to use.

After you have added paint to the areas you want to be coloured you will use a couple of melding techniques, and then you will dry your painting. When dry it needs to be heat-cured to set the colours before washing away all traces of the gutta.

Once you've grasped the basics, (about two sessions) you can decide if you'd like to order your own supply of materials and continue on to greater things, or to call it a day. If you've had fun and enjoyed yourself you would be more than welcome to become a permanent member. We don't care if you think you're not so good at it - just look at the work in the Gallery on our U3A Silk Group webpage to see what you can achieve when you start with absolute-zero confidence in your ability.

It's the creative process that makes your brain swap hemispheres from the busy, practical side to the imaginative, relaxed side; and it's about entering the "Zen-zone" of creativity for creativity's sake. You can not control silk paint - it moves and mixes at its own pace and direction - you have to let go and enjoy where the paint takes you.

It's about the creative process, and not so much the actual creation. As long as we've spent a peaceful, happy and relaxing couple of hours, we've achieved our primary aim. And if you have something pretty and useful to show, then that's a bonus.

Our dates, up to February 2017, are always the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays from 2-4 p.m. at Victoria Bowling Club, so: 4th October, 18th October, 1st November, 15th November, 6th December, 20th December, 3rd January 2017, 17th January, 7th February and 21st February.

After the shockingly sudden death of our much-loved leader, Christine Todd, the group decided that we would split the six main functions, of a silk group leader, between us. As such we have no group leader, but two of us will act as group contacts:

Maralyn Eardley: 01684 - 439 945, maralynearldley@gmail.com - contact for silk group members and prospective members

Lis Dobb-Sandi : 07775 - 726 838, higharcturus@yahoo.co.uk - contact for U3A Trustees and silk group members.

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. 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. Go to our web page and click on the box marked TRIPS. All trips are listed with full details, plus the name of the organiser and their contact details. To organise going on a trip simply contact the appropriate Trip Organiser and go from there.

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

Trip Details

2016

Tuesday 25th October

Wedgewood World, The Potteries

Contact: Richard Shenton

Tel: 01684 - 566 415

Depart from The Malvern Splash car park 08.00

Price per person £22.00, includes Entrance to the factory/museum, coach and driver's tip.

Thursday 3rd November

Return visit to Windsor Castle, including The Queen's 90 Years of Fashion Exhibition.

Contact: Peter Dennis Tel: 01886 880838

For everyone who came on our last visit in March will be entitled to FREE admission, provided they had their ticket validated and have kept it. For those who did not come on the previous visit they will also need a group ticket.

Cost: £12.00 for ticket holders & £28.00 for those who require an entrance ticket.

Depart from The Malvern Splash car park 08.00.

Saturday 12th November 2016

Birmingham Symphony Hall Concert matinee at 2.30pm

Contact: Mrs Anne Bisson

Capella, Whittington, WR5 2RP

Tel: 01905 - 354 079 Mobile: 07931 - 636 309

or e-mail: ramahajo@ymail.com

Friday 25th November

Visit to Croome Court estate to have an hours talk on The Red Wing. This building, next to The House, held the Servants Quarters, The Kitchens and Offices. Following the talk there will be free time to visit The House, (upstairs is now open to the public) and grounds. After this we will have a cream tea before departing.

Contact: Pat Hague Tel: 01905 - 828 249

Cost: Entrance fee for non-National Trust members £9.50 per person

Cost of talk: £5.00 per person and £4.25 per person for the cream tea.

No transport provided. We may be able to offer transport with other members.

2017

Wednesday 26th April

Tour of Madresfield House.

Contact; Pat Hague Tel: 01905 - 828 249

Cost: £13.00 per person

Meet up at Madresfield House at 2.30pm for a guided tour lasting 90 minutes. There are toilets, but no refreshments available. Please note there are stairs and a lot of standing on this tour.

Pat Hague: Co-Leader

U3A Singers

A change to the frequency of the meeting day

It was decided that the group would trial meeting every week, starting from 14th September until the middle of December. If it is successful the weekly meetings will continue.



Apart from this change everything else stays the same.

Meeting from 2.30 to 4pm in the upper floor of Trinity Church Hall. Malvern Link.

New members are always welcome – you do not need to be able to read music – we learn by repetition.

This term we will be looking at the music from South Pacific, some unison singing in the form of rounds, carols, Christmas songs etc.

Ann Peach



Members of the Good Beer Group sampling the beers at the Brandy Cask, Pershore

Theatre Studies

(Manor Park at 10am)

26th October

Theatrical performances by Kenneth Williams (talk
by Alan Starkey)

30th November

Discussion , subject to be arranged.

Boules Social



The Boules Group held a social evening over the summer with prizes for the event and for 'Player of the Year' being presented by Nigel Slater the editor of the Malvern Observer. A lovely evening was enjoyed by all.

Winner of Singles KO Competition: Phil Saunders

Runner-up: Derek Mesure

Player of the Year: Jena Endall

Richard Shenton



*Ken North's
Meccano Windmill
and Traction Engine
seen at the Groups
Fair.*



Photos: Ruaridh Macdonald

Geology



17 Members of the Group, pictured above, have just returned from a field trip based in and around Bude. The field trip was led by Rosemary Dartnall from Birmingham University and studied the sequence of heavily folded Devonian/Carboniferous sedimentary rocks from Tintagel to Bude via Crackington Haven and Millook.

Once again we have had a very successful Groups Fair with about 24 new people signing on as new members. As in previous years we have arranged an introductory series of sessions, both indoors and outdoors, to help introduce our new members to the subject.

The programme for our monthly lecture series up until Christmas is as follows:

- 12th October - 'The Geology of Anglesey' by Rosemary Dartnall
- 9th November – 'Ancient Subduction Zones in the UK' by Chris Darmon
- 14th December – 'Historical Large Scale Volcanism' by Dr. Ralph Gertisser

Computer Group

2nd Thursday @ 10 (Manor Park)

PC themed meetings: 13th October, 8th December, 9th February, 13th April

Apple themed meetings: 10th November, 12th January, 9th March, 11th May

Would you like to try ...

Heraldry

I have been wondering whether there would be sufficient interest to form a new group to study heraldry, that is the art and science of coats of arms. I have always been fascinated by this rather esoteric and perhaps now rather unfashionably 'elitist' subject which, however, continues to form part of our everyday visual lives in all sorts of surprising ways. What I am thinking of is a short course of perhaps six sessions in the Spring, with a concluding excursion to search out examples in the real world.



*Coat of Arms of Peter,
6th Baron Carrington*

Such a course might cover the origins and development of heraldry, its special language, its visual impact, its use by bodies like schools and companies as well as by families, its relationship to genealogy and family history, and its place in the contemporary world.

I ought to say that this is specifically not about genealogy and family history research per se, for which there is already a well-established group, but about the study of heraldry, or 'armory', as a historical and contemporary phenomenon.

If you think you might be interested please let me know via a brief email or telephone call, and I will think about it further. I need hardly say that such expressions of interest will not count in any way as commitments!

Bob Ruffle

07866 - 703 100

bob.ruffle@tesco.net

New Readers' Group

Starts Friday 30th September 2016, 2 pm at the Cube

and from then on the last Friday afternoon of each month.

This is for people who love reading to bring a book along and talk about it – any book on anything: eg history, geography, travel, religion, biography, science, gardening, biology, entertainment, etc

It is NOT going to be a 'book of the month'.

Gill Holt will start it off.

Info from 01684 - 568 055

e-mail: gillmholt@gmail.com

Christmas Lunch (Yes, it's that time of year again!)

Hello everyone.

It has fallen to me to organise this year's Malvern U3A Christmas lunch. I went and had a chat with Sharon, one of the chef's at the Worcester Golf Club, and as I now have the menu. (The menu and booking form are included with this edition of the Newsletter.) The lunch is on Wednesday 14th December; 12.30 for 1pm and will cost £21.00. The same price as last year!



I always have turkey and all the trimmings but I think there is a very good selection on this year's menu. I do hope you will come and join us.

I look forward to seeing you then.

Jenny Jackson



Great Malvern Station
Kate Jefferies



Summer project work
from the Camera Group

Penang street art
Marcela Hales

Speakers for our Monthly Meeting - 2pm at The Cube

25th October **'Window on Medieval Women'**

29th November **Malvern U3A AGM** (2.00pm)
followed by **'Help for Heroes'**

December No meeting - but don't forget the Christmas Lunch

For details of meetings go to <http://malvernu3a.org.uk/meetings/>

Malvern Bagnères Twinning Association



As you may know Malvern is now twinned with Bagnères-de-Bigorre, a spa town situated at the foot of the Pyrenees, near to Lourdes and Tarbes. Following the official signing of our Twinning Oath, the Malvern Bagnères Twinning Association is looking for people to join us, enjoying social evenings in Malvern and planning reciprocal twinning visits. Bagnères has lots of cultural, sporting and musical societies, several of whom have expressed an

interest in becoming involved. If groups or individuals/couples would like to find out more or if you are willing to help us with the organisation of social events we would love to hear from you.

E-mail me, Cathy Millar on thameshead@hotmail.co.uk or give me a ring on 01684 - 575 808.



'A bientot!'



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 separately as .jpg files

Please note the deadline for the February edition is

Friday 27th January 2017