

A vibrant field of red poppies with green foliage and stems, serving as the background for the newsletter cover.

MALVERN

Nº 84 AUTUMN 2017

U3A

NEWSLETTER

Annual General Meeting
Tuesday 28th November
The Cube, Albert Road North

Christmas lunch
Friday 15th December
Worcestershire Golf Club
Menu and booking form enclosed

U3A Committee (Trustees)

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CHAIR'S NOTES

This is the last edition of the Newsletter before the AGM when my time as the Chair of Malvern U3A will come to an end: I've been on the Trustees' committee for nearly five years now, first as Groups' organiser and then as Chair and that is the limit of one's time, in accordance with our constitution. This is a sensible limit: it gives time to get to know how things work and then to be useful in whatever one does for the U3A. Having a time limit stops the Committee becoming a clique and frees committee space for others to take a part on a regular basis.

People sometimes think there are "committee types" as if we are a strange exotic species – but I think a good committee has all sorts of people with differing skills and that has been true of the people with whom I've worked for the last three years.

I'd like to thank all of them on your behalf: as I've said before, nothing would happen in the U3A without willing volunteers who will manage the finances, keep records and write letters, help group leaders and organise the Groups Fair, look after membership and the webpage, maintain technical equipment, find interesting speakers for the monthly meeting, book rooms or produce a newsletter. This means that there is a role for everyone and when you receive the papers for the AGM, you may be drawn to offer your services as a Trustee – if not this year but in the future.

It really has been fun being part of the engine which drives Malvern U3A, but now I'm looking forward to just being part of my U3A groups without having the responsibilities – phone calls, emails, dealing with (happily very few) complaints, chairing meetings - that being the Chair has brought. We have a wonderful organisation in the U3A which enriches the later stages of our lives, and it has so much to offer.

This year I've followed my own advice and challenged myself to join something "outside my comfort zone" as they say, doing maths. I'm sure it is nourishing a different part of my brain. I recommend this to you: next year, try something completely different!

Best wishes

Pam Stanier

FROM THE TRUSTEES

Annual Group Leaders Meeting

All Malvern U3A Group Leaders are invited to the annual Group Leaders meeting which will be held on Tuesday 31st October from 10.00am until 12.30pm. It will again be at Manor Park, Albert Road North, WR14 2TL. Coffee and tea will be provided – as well as more delicious cakes lovingly baked by Committee members!

I have a few agenda items already, but would welcome ideas from you about any issues that you would like to be discussed. It is also an opportunity for you to meet up with committee members and other group leaders and exchange ideas etc. over coffee and cake. Please email or 'phone me with your ideas (groups@malvernu3a.org.uk Tel: 01684 566208). I'll then circulate a draft agenda nearer to the time.

Annette Maxted, Groups Coordinator

Malvern U3A Groups Fair

The Malvern U3A Groups Fair (formerly Registration Morning) was a great success again this year. Held in the Forum at Malvern Theatres, the atmosphere was buzzing. Hundreds of people came along to renew their membership and sign up for their chosen groups. There were also dozens of new members signing up to U3A for the first time. This year we had marshals in hi-vis waistcoats to direct people and it all seemed to run very smoothly.

With around one hundred groups represented we were all spoiled for choice! There are interest and activity groups as diverse as cycling, geology, play reading, boules or knitting and crochet, and there's now a choice of five different languages to learn!

Since last year a number of new groups have started up. These include Italian language groups, the Study of Fairy Tales, Walking with Dogs, Rummikub and Mah Jong, as well as thriving groups for members who think they can't sing, but "Sing Anyway" and for those who wish to rediscover William Morris. Some activities are too new to have made it into the Groups Directory, but most were represented on the day. So if you are interested in Nutrition and Health, Economic Discussion or what happens to your blood when it goes to the Pathology Lab., then there is a group for you!

Thank you to everyone who helped to make it such an enjoyable and successful event.

The theatre is already booked for next year, so put the date in your 2018 diary! Monday September 3rd. at 10.00am, and I'll see you there.

Annette Maxted, Groups Coordinator

Current Membership of Malvern U3A

At the end of September we had about 1360 members, of whom just under 140 were new. Subscriptions are still of course coming in and we hope to recruit more new members during the year, so following the pattern of previous years we expect total membership in 2018 to approach 1600, significantly more than last year's total. U3A's steady growth each year is testimony to the popularity of our groups and the dedication of our talented Group Leaders.

Robin Clarke, Membership Secretary

News from National Office

West Midlands Regional Trustee

Auriol Ainley is the new Trustee representing the West Midlands on the National Executive Committee. Audrey moved to Pershore fifteen years ago from Berkshire, where she was born. She started her career as a legal secretary, and ended up as company director with a Swiss pharmaceutical firm. Employed by the BBC Monitoring Unit during the Falklands war, she then worked for large international organisations, mainly in the pharmaceutical or computer industries, setting up and managing specialist divisions across the world. Auriol joined Pershore U3A in 2005, later becoming its Chairman, and then Chairman of Cotswold U3A Link, before getting involved with the West Midlands Region.



Audrey writes, "I spent my teenage years rowing on the Thames at Maidenhead, but travel and languages were and still are, important to me. I love sewing and had my own little company for many years making specialist outfits and wedding dresses. The U3A is such an amazing organisation and we are all able to carry on learning what we like, and try all things new. I attend a German group, knit, sew, and go to Psychology. I help with a Toddler group – thus incorporating both ends of the age scale!"

Closure of U3A Legal Helpline

The National Executive Committee closed this service to members at the end of September. Sharon Mauger, National Chief Executive - Legal Helpline, reported that the Trust was paying £19,000 for the helpline, which had been available to all U3A members. It was decided that these funds would be better used in promoting the charity's aims. Usage of the helpline was very small and advice is readily available from other sources. However, the Trust will try to ensure that U3A organisational legal matters are dealt with by specialist lawyers on a case by case basis.

Relocation of National Office

The Third Age Trust's National Office has recently moved from Bromley to Southwark in South London (see address details below). The new premises are close to the main rail, tube and bus transport services. National Chairman, Pam Jones, writes, "The Trust is proud to finally have a fully accessible office space, allowing members to visit regardless of their mobility". The move is considered to be cost-effective as National Executive meetings can now be held in the new premises instead of, as before, incurring the expense of hiring venues in Central London. Pam Jones warmly invites U3A members to call in at the new premises when they're in London – where they can meet the staff, or pick up publicity materials and goods from the shop.

U3A National Office, The Third Age Trust, 52 Lant Street, London SE1 1RB
Phone 020 8466 6139 www.u3a.org.uk

NEWS FROM GROUPS



Military History Group

Excellentlly organised by Joan and Jim Murphy, with extensive and comprehensive on-the-ground talks by Alan Gray and Mark Tovey, the Malvern U3A Military History group recently followed in the footsteps of Operation Market Garden, the futile - and costly in human life - Allied attempt in September 1944 to finish the war by Christmas.

We visited the landing zones where parachutists and

gliders landed, sometimes at a terrible price; the many bridges which spanned the massive rivers and canals which the allies tried to take intact; and the towns and villages where sometimes bitter hand-to-hand fighting took place; finally ending in Arnhem - A Bridge Too Far. The photo shows some of the group under the bridge at Arnhem.

Donald Handy, dshandy@btinternet.com

Camera Group

The Camera Group got its new season off to a flying start in September when Roger Dixon told us about his trip to America in August to photograph the solar eclipse. The trip had effectively been six years in the planning since witnessing a partial eclipse in 2011. Even with such a long planning phase there were still some things that went beyond the group's control, and forest fires in Oregon, putting great amounts of smoke in the sky just where they planned to stay, made new plans essential. However, Roger found a new base for the group and having checked out the site for watching the eclipse they readied themselves for the big day. They had been warned about heavy traffic on the day, so set out very early only to find that traffic was practically non-existent on their route. At least the early arrival gave plenty of time to set up the equipment, and Roger explained to the group what he had used and showed them the specially designed filter he had built to protect the camera sensor from direct sunlight. With a clear sky, the images that Roger had obtained showed brilliantly the stages of the eclipse (see example below). Britain will not see a total solar eclipse until September 23, 2090, but there are plenty of partial eclipses in the meantime to keep nyctophiles content. Thanks to Roger for his presentation, and for getting it ready so quickly after having returned from the States.

Richard Owen



The Camera Group meets on the third Friday of the month at Manor Park, and our programme for the coming year is ...

October	Zoom & Prime lenses
November	Members' Photo Essays
January	Light
February	Composition
March	Photographing animals
April	Members' Photo Essays
May	Camera menus
June	Photography or Art?

Members who may be interested in joining the group should contact Richard Owen at: camera@malvernu3a.org.uk



The Sólfar Sun Voyager monument, Reykjavik
Carole Newton, Camera Group

The Good Beer Group



The photo shows the Good Beer Group trip to Lakehouse Brewery in Malvern, our latest new brewery - situated on the southern end of Peachfield Common. Fifteen of us had a tour around the brewery and then sampled the produce. A good time was had by all.
Richard Newton

Walking Group - Walks Programme

October 30th: Leaders Duncan & Jay McRae.

duncan.macrae104@btinternet.com Meet at The Blue Bell, Ryall for an easy walk by the river.

November 27th: Leader Carl Flint. malvernwalks@yahoo.co.uk

December 18th (not 25th!): Leader Roger Hales. Meet at The British Camp for a pre-Christmas ramble.

We now need two people to assist with walk continuity and act as contacts when the group leader is away. Volunteers to lead walks next year are also sought.

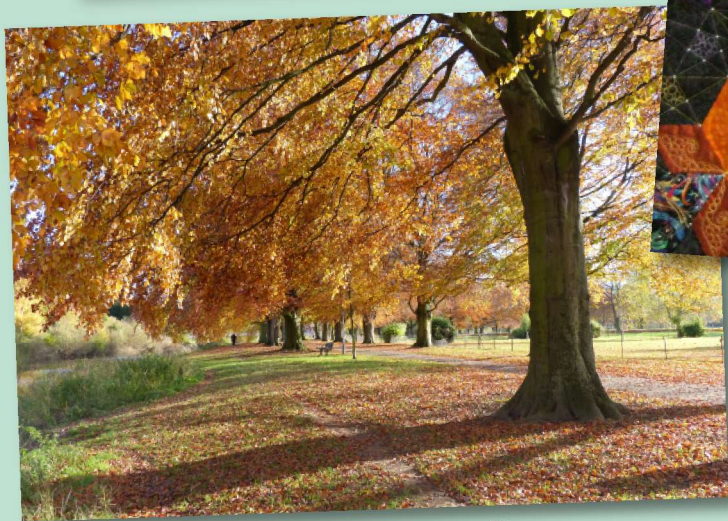
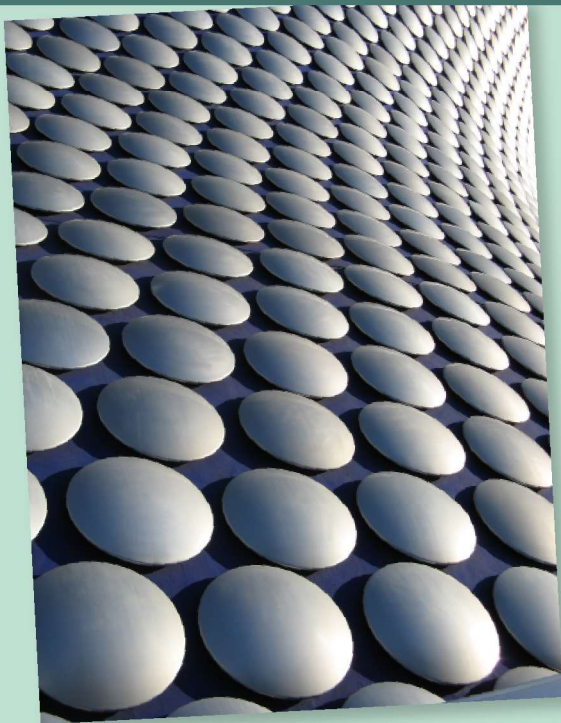
Please contact Roger if you are willing to help: rogerhales26@gmail.com



A Summer Walk in Shrawley Woods

Camera Group

Clockwise from top left: Kate Jefferies, *Untitled*; Janet Farnes, *Super Rose*; Lorna Blackwell, *Untitled*; Liz Galloway, *Untitled*; Rosemary McCulloch, *Quilt Show*; Morris Portsmouth, *Untitled*





Boules and Petanque Groups

In August we held our Boules Social Evening and Presentation in the park by Great Malvern Railway Station. The Mayor of Malvern, Cynthia Palmer (front row, third from left in the photo) came to present the prizes. The Singles Knockout runner up was Derek Michael, the winner Derek Carter and our Player of the Year was Ann Jordan.

Richard Shenton rickandjudith@outlook.com



Well dressing in Spring Lane
Joan Smith, Camera Group

U3A Singers

Pianist needed

Because of a family illness, our current pianist has had to resign and therefore we are looking for an accompanist for our rehearsals and occasional "concerts". We meet every Wednesday at Trinity Church Upper Hall in Malvern Link from 2.30 - 4.00 pm. It is not necessary for the pianist to attend every meeting but every other week would be OK. We do sing a wide range of music from the old to the new.

If you are interested, please phone me and if I'm not able to answer please leave a message and phone number.

Ann Peach 01684 562718

Welsh Culture Group

July 2017 – Ten-year Celebration

Our meeting in July took the form of an Eisteddfod when we revisited notable events of the last ten years. Each year was announced in Welsh by Elaine Comber before each item, the first of which was presented by Sandy Slater (previously Williams) telling us about Swansea Gaudy Pottery. Between each item a “Llantysilio” (our group’s answer to the Limerick poem) was read. These short poems had all been written by members of the group for different occasions.

In the second item Kate Jefferies told us about the “ex-pats” of Patagonia and this was followed by an extract from Dylan Thomas’s *Under Milk Wood* read by Terry Taylor, David Taylor, Ken Hart and James Hall. David James then spoke to us about Chartism, especially relating to the Newport Rising. The first half of the morning ended with Terry Taylor speaking briefly about Aberfan before playing us a piece from Karl Jenkins’ *Cantata Memoria* which was written for the 50th anniversary of the tragedy in October 2016.

After the break, when we celebrated in true Welsh fashion with plenty to eat, Hazel Haslam told us of the setting up of the Cymbach Male Voice Choir and its success in recent years. This was followed by Sheila Owens showing us photographs of the holidays which the group had undertaken over the past ten years. Pat Hague spoke briefly of Wales’ contribution to the Great War and then we sang *Keep the home fires burning*.

Sue Price spoke about The National Eisteddfod, the International Eisteddfod at Llangollen and our own eisteddfodau, before calling on Duncan McCrae to read his eisteddfod entry from a few years ago. Sue Wheeler recounted the day excursions we have enjoyed and then Terry Taylor played a recording of Max Boyce singing *The Scottish Trip* and we joined in the chorus.



Sandy Slater receiving her presentation



It was then time for the presentation to Sandy Slater for her work running the group for the past ten years. She was presented with some flowers and a love spoon which had been made by David Comber and depicted a Welsh daffodil, an English rose and other features which reflected Sandy's caring personality. She duly cut the cake (shown on previous page) which had been made especially for the event and we all had a piece to take home. We ended the morning's celebrations by singing *We'll keep a welcome in the hillsides*.
Sue Price

The Geology Group



The geology group completed its summer series of field trips with a walk along the Hergest ridge on the 20th September. The 5-mile route goes from Kington, on the far side of Leominster, to Gladestry and traverses the border between England and Wales reaching a maximum height of 426 metres. The ridge has spectacular views across Wales in one direction and Hereford in the other. The weather was excellent, so it was possible to see the Malvern Hills to the East

and as far as the Brecon Beacons and beyond in the West. The geology of the area is determined by the well known Church Stretton Fault which passes along the base of the ridge. Our group was fortunate to be led by Dr Geoff Steele, a local geologist with an unrivalled knowledge of the area without whom we would have missed so much interesting detail. Offa's Dyke passes along part of the ridge and another unusual feature is the remains of a Victorian racecourse on the very top used around the middle of the 19th Century. An area on the ridge was also cultivated during the last war as part of the 'Dig for Victory' campaign. The picture shows us discussing a group of 'erratics' which are boulders moved here by a glacier during an ice age.

The end of the summer programme sees the group looking forward to our winter programme of lectures and subgroup activities. Once again the group recruited over 20 new members at the Groups Fair and we look forward to welcoming them to our meetings. As before, we will be running a series of sessions especially for our new members to help introduce them to the basics of the subject. The first lecture of the main winter programme is on Wednesday 11th October entitled 'The Metal Mines of Spain'. Roger Hunt

Botany Group



Toothwort (*Lathraea squamaria*)



Changing Forget-Me-Not
(*Myosotis discolor*)



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Astronomy and Astrophysics Group

Group Leader, Chris Baddiley, had to postpone the course last year when he suffered complications following a leg fracture. The Group started meeting again this term. Sessions take place in Chris's home on agreed dates. Further information from Chris on cjbaddiley@gmail.com 01886 880047



Examples of work by members of the Patchwork & Needle Skills Group

Painting Group 2

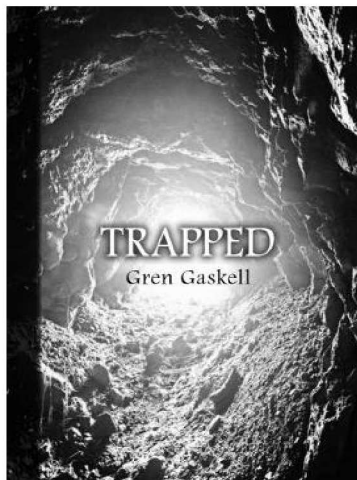
We continue to meet on the 2nd and 4th Friday of each month with a new topic each session to challenge our members. We use a variety of media, and help one another when necessary, also using Art material, books and videos, and the internet to explore new ideas and improve our painting. We have a few new members this term, but we welcome anyone else who may be interested to come along and give it a try. Call me on 01684 575383, Val Bruton



Some artworks by group members shown below:



Gren's First Book



Former Chair of Malvern U3A and Malvern Writers' Circle, Gren Gaskell has published his first book, *TRAPPED*. Gren says, "I owe a huge thank you to the many people in Malvern who have given me so much encouragement over the past decade. They have heard me say many times that moving to live here was, for me, like moving onto a different planet and on hearing my stories in the Writers' Circle and the U3A they have said time and again 'Get them written into a book.' I was married at 18 and widowed at 58. Neither of us had much education and we never went to an art gallery, a museum or a symphony concert. We carried an over-riding sense that these were 'not for the likes of us.'

Now I know how wrong we were and I have a life filled with so much pleasure I feel I may be the luckiest, the happiest of men. Twelve years ago I married a Malvern woman and she has encouraged me to write the stories carried from my previous environment. A second book is in preparation because I feel very strongly that if these stories are not recorded they will be lost forever."

Gren's book is available from Aspect Design, Newton Road and the Malvern Book Co-operative on St. Ann's Road, as well as from various on-line sites.

The Literature Group's Summer Garden Party



Sitting in the sun reading poetry



Examples of work by the Handicrafts Group

Christmas Meal

Hello everyone

This year's Malvern Branch Christmas Lunch is on Friday 15th December at Worcestershire Golf Club at 1.00 pm and is £22.00 per person - only £1 increase on last year! The menu/booking form is in this newsletter and can also be printed from our website (<https://malvernu3a.org.uk/>). The closing date for bookings is Friday 24th November.

Along with your completed order form and cheque for the full amount, please send a **stamped addressed envelope** so that I can send you your tickets. Perhaps some group members would like to sit together? If you let me know I might be able to arrange this with the chef, Sharon.

I do hope you will come and join us and I look forward to seeing you there.



Save the date: **next year's** Christmas lunch will be on Wednesday 12th December 2018. Jenny Jackson, General Secretary

Speakers' topics for our Monthly Meeting - 2pm at The Cube

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

The Cube Cafe is open for refreshments after the meeting.

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|-------------|---|
| 31 October | <i>Shackleton's Odyssey at the South Pole</i> - local member Roger Smith will talk about the Polar explorer who led three British expeditions to Antarctica |
| 28 November | Annual General Meeting - followed with a talk by Ruth Pole about <i>The Ships of Mercy</i> - the international charity devoted to providing free medical treatment to people where no other help is available |
| December | No meeting, but don't forget Christmas Lunch on the 15th |
| 30 January | <i>Lies and Deceit in War</i> , by Bob Skelt |

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 February edition is

Monday 29 January 2018